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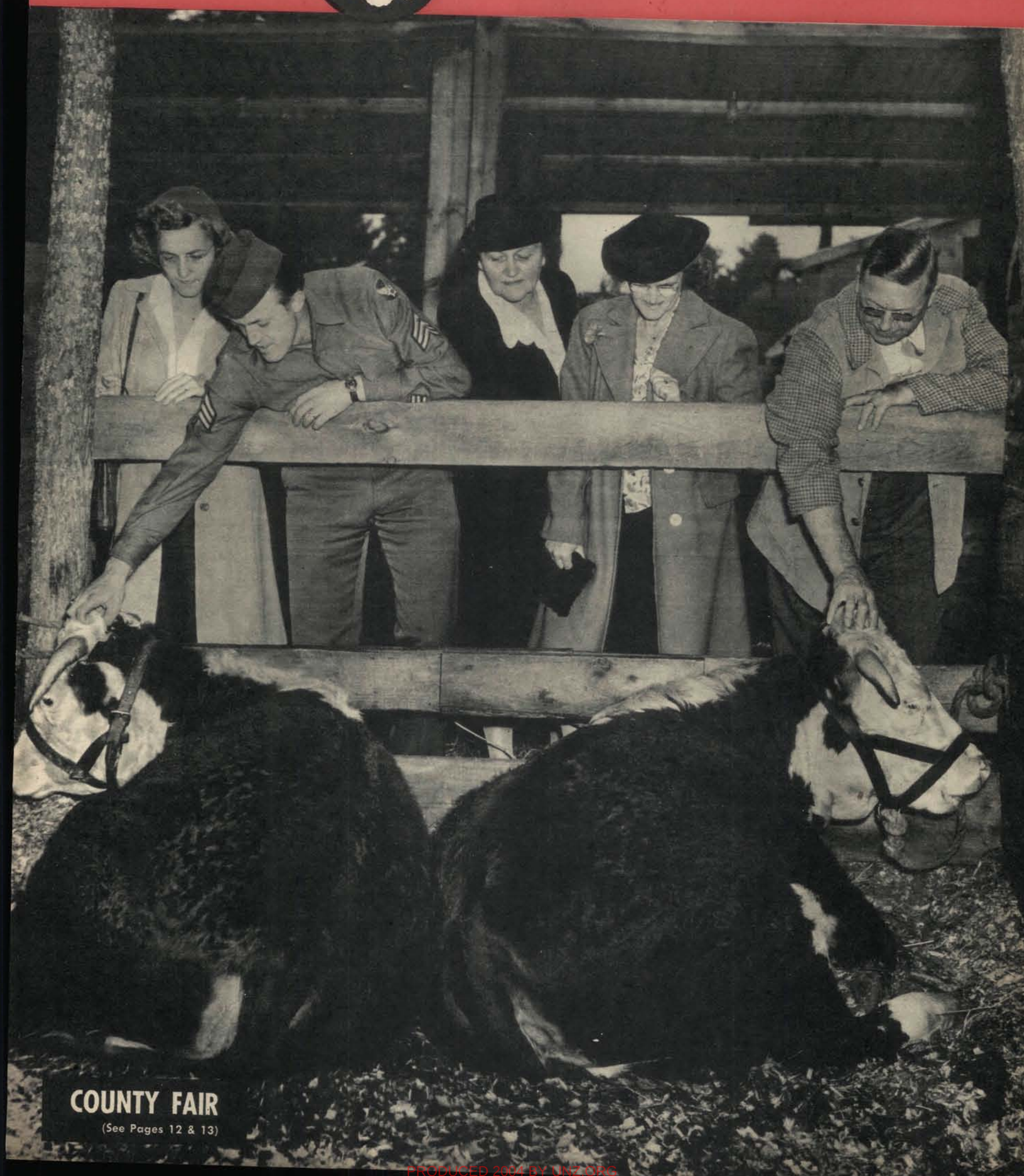

COUNTY FAIR

(See Pages 12 & 13)

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Freed prisoners walk out of a Jap prison camp near Fusiki on Honshu. The camp held 300, of whom 156 were American and the rest men captured at Singapore.

These were the eleven nationalities represented at the Honshu prison camp. From left to right, the men are: American, Spanish, Irish, Indian, Dutch, English, Australian, Greek, Egyptian, Filipino and Chinese.

By Sgt. BILL LINDAU
YANK Staff Correspondent

YOKOHAMA—Marine Cpl. Bernie Pitts of Dallas and his friend, Pfc. Nyndal B. Preslar, of San Angelo, Tex., were in a PW camp near the town of Maribara, on the western side of the Jap island of Honshu, when the war ended. They had been taken by the Japs on Corregidor.

It wasn't until August 21 that the two marines and the other PWs knew that the war had ended in a victory for our side. "The Jap commandant got us assembled," said Pitts, "and he announced, '*Senso shumi.*' That means, 'The war is over.' Then he walked away from us and went back to his office. The guards put away their arms after that, and the gates were left open. We were told we could have all the rice we wanted."

Pitts says he "yelled like hell," and a couple of others did too, but that considering everything, the camp was pretty quiet. It wasn't until later that they learned that one of the Americans had got hold of a Jap newspaper on August 16 in which was printed the Emperor's message to his people about the surrender. Pitts says the Yank who got the news first was afraid to tell anyone about it because he thought everyone

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PRISON

These prisoners are not wearing fancy dress to celebrate their freedom. It was Jap issue in the camp.

To two Yanks in a Jap prison camp, the war was a mist of rumor from their capture on Corregidor until the day VJ news hit their Honshu PW enclosure.

would riot and that the Japs might retaliate.

Most people in the camp, said Pitts, were too numb to move or do anything to celebrate the victory. "We'd waited a hell of a long time for this," he said. "A lot of the prisoners had been too beaten down. They didn't have any spirit left. They just sat and stared without any expression. They're still in camp."

The Japs opened up and became quite generous and showed the prisoners unfamiliar kindnesses. They gave each man a bottle of beer. The rations of rice, soy beans and turnips were increased to such an extent that the prisoners gorged themselves, for the first time in years, and many became sick. American medics among the prisoners advised the Japs to cut the food ration down because the prisoners were not accustomed to such quantities of food. "And," said Pitts, "there was said to be an order out from some general or other that any Jap guard who mistreated any Allied prisoner would be shot."

Until then the PWs were in rags. Half the 200 men in the camp were barefoot. No one had socks. The Nips broke open clothing that should have been issued long before their Government called it quits.

The papers showed pictures of American planes dropping stuff over PW camps.

"We worked two days making signs for the planes to follow. Then we set them up and waited. We waited three days, and they never came. I heard later the planes dropped the stuff at Osaka, but the PWs over there got it, and there wasn't enough to send to us."

Pitts and Preslar went into town—their first night outside a prison camp since their capture.

"The Jap military were sulky as hell. But the civilians seemed happy the whole thing was over. They stared at us and some of them were downright friendly," Preslar said.

"I heard from some Aussies that came into the camp from Osaka that MacArthur had landed in Tokyo. So Pitts and I decided to get the hell over there.

"We went to the railroad station about 7 o'clock the evening of the 30th and caught a train. The cars were jammed with civilians, so we had to hang on the outside. We got between two cars and hung on the hand rails all night.

"We pulled into Tokyo station, and got off. We didn't see any sign of an American.

"We walked down to the waterfront. We were standing in a burned-out lot there, looking over the bay when this Jap MP walked over to us. He was polite and friendly, and he asked us what we were doing there. He didn't speak much English, just enough to make himself understood. Pitts told him, with motions, that we wanted to see Americans.

"The MP went off, and came back with an interpreter. He wrote something on a piece of paper, and gave it to the interpreter.

"About that time, a B-29 came over. It was a big sonuvabitch. It dropped some parachutes, with crates. One of the crates broke off and headed straight for us. We ducked out of the way, and it smashed the ground a few feet away. It had all the stuff we'd dreamed about. Cigarettes and candy—and cans of peaches. The MP told us not to take too much, because it was for other Allied prisoners, too.

"The interpreter got us in a Ford, and we went off. He drove us down the road until we came to a roadblock. There were a couple of American soldiers there. The interpreter got out and told them about us. Then he bowed to everybody and drove back toward Tokyo.

"The GIs were from the 11th Airborne Division. They were paratroopers and the biggest guys I've ever seen. All these guys are big."

The paratroopers guarding the road into Tokyo got the two marines a jeep after a spirited discussion of the relative merits of the Army and Marines. The jeep driver let them out at the entrance of the New Grand Hotel.

They went upstairs, feeling self-conscious, and walked into the lobby.

"No one paid attention to us," said Pitts, "though we must have stuck out like sore thumbs. There was more brass than I've ever seen anywhere—everything from colonels on up. We got a glimpse of MacArthur, too. We'd been on the Rock with him, but this was the first time we'd ever actually seen him.

"Finally, a buck sergeant came over to us. He looked worried and confused. I guess maybe it was because he was the only enlisted man in the lobby. He asked us if he could help, so we told him who we were and where we had come from.

"He steered us over to the big dining room and started to take us in. But there was too much rank in there, so we told him we didn't have time for anything fancy. He tried to talk us into the place, but finally told us to go downstairs to the 188th Parachute Infantry CP, and showed us the way."

That's where the two marines had their first opportunity to find out what had happened to the world they had been hidden away from and to ask questions about how the war had been won. The equipment of the paratroopers amazed them. They couldn't take their eyes off the carbines with folding stocks that they thought at first were a new kind of tommy gun. And the soldiers asked questions too.

"No one will believe us," said Preslar. "I can hardly believe some of the things that happened to us now that it's all over. If no one believes us, I won't blame them." He began the story.

After the surrender on Corregidor, the survivors were loaded into barges and taken to Manila. Preslar and Pitts were both in the hos-

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pital when the Japs came to accept the surrender. Pitts was hit in the leg by a piece of shrapnel from a shell that wounded or killed 42 men. Preslar had been shot in the hand accidentally. They were both weak and sick when they were thrown into Bilibid Prison.

"Next day," said Pitts, "they loaded us into a train for Cabanatuan.

"They stuffed us in worse than cattle. It was hotter than hell, and there wasn't any water. There were a hundred men to a box car. About 35 would have been fairly comfortable in them.

"We walked the last 20 kilometers to Cabanatuan. I heard about the Death March from Bataan, and I guess I never would have made it. I barely made the march to Cabanatuan.

"We started off with a canteen of water, but that didn't last long. None of us were strong, after the time on Corregidor. We were half starved, and the Nips hadn't helped much. Just some rice a couple of times a day since we'd surrendered.

"The Nips beat hell out of anybody who lagged, and they set a stiff pace. A man would fall out, and they'd beat him with clubs and kick him to his feet. If he didn't get up, they'd set a small white flag by him, and go off. I guess that meant he was dead. I never heard what happened to anyone they left by the side of the road.

"We were at Cabanatuan for five weeks. During the first two weeks, there wasn't any medical setup at all. Dysentery broke out. Everybody had it, I guess. Everybody but us. We were just lucky. It was pretty bad there, but we didn't know how bad it would get later, in other places.

"They were feeding us just about enough to keep us alive, I think, and we were always hungry. We went out into the jungles every day, cutting lumber. I guess those trips into the jungle kept us going. We worked like hell, but we managed to pick up a little more to eat."

Preslar nodded.

"I'm a coconut fan, and I have been ever since Cabanatuan," he said.

"They kept us going that time, and we were able to take a lot more than the others who didn't get anything more than what the Nips gave them. There were bananas out there, too. We used to sneak 'em, green, off the trees, and hide them till they got ripe.

"That's when the Nips said they'd shoot anybody they caught sneaking fruit back into camp. They did catch six guys and they were shot. But after that, they gave up. It got to be a joke, them telling us they'd shoot us if we were caught.

"But the way it is with the Japs is this: Anything you do is okay as long as you don't get caught at it. Getting caught is the crime, to them."

On June 24, 1942, the two marines, with 300 other American prisoners, mostly Army men, were loaded on freight cars for the trip to Palawan.

"We worked on an air strip there. We worked on it all the time we were there, 10 hours a day for over two years," Preslar said.

"Sometimes we worked longer, after dark. It was just a relay strip between Luzon and Borneo, and I never saw more than six patrol bombers there at any one time.

"The Nips didn't have much fuel for them. Sometimes they'd just sit there for two or three days at a time and never go out. Occasionally a ship would pull in and unload gas and oil. But not very often.

"We got a day off a week at first, then a day off every two weeks for a while. Finally, we got a day off when and if the Nips felt like giving us one.

"The first week we were there, six men escaped. I don't know what ever happened to them. All together, about 27 men escaped from camp, and made it into the jungle.

"The Nips were pretty lenient until the first bunch escaped. Then they cracked down. They split us into squads of 10 men each. They told us that if any man tried to escape, the other nine men in the squad would be shot. We didn't have any escapes from our bunch after that."

Living was miserable at Palawan, like all other Jap prison camps. Only one third of the men had blankets. They lived and worked in rags.

Two of the POWs were beaten to death. They were on a detail which was unloading a ship. They and four others stole three cans of beef. The Nips missed the beef, and they lined us all up. The commandant demanded that the guys who stole the stuff step out. No one moved. Then they started smacking hell out of us. We had to stand at attention while three guards passed down the line and beat each man with clubs. Another Jap, a first sergeant and former Nip baseball star whom we called The Bull, had a whip. He passed behind the guys with the clubs and cut us with that whip. It lasted two hours. Finally, one of the guys who had helped steal the beef admitted that he had done it. He tried to take the whole blame.

"But the other five wouldn't let him do it. They all stepped out. We were forced to watch what happened to them. They were tied to a coconut tree, facing the trunk.

"The guards had clubs bigger than a baseball bat. They beat those guys across the back, and across the kidneys. When a man would pass out, they'd throw water on him until he came to. Then they'd beat him again.

"They kept this up for about 20 minutes. When they quit, two of the men were dead. The other four were sent back to Manila to the dungeons at Fort Santiago. One man came back. We never heard what happened to the other three."

The camp commandant would sometimes hide a carton of cigarettes in the jungle we were clearing. Then he'd say it would belong to the company whose men found it first. We never knew exactly where it was, of course, so we'd cut jungle grass fast as we could, hoping to get to it before anyone else did.

"At Christmas time, there was a prize. The 10 best workers got a towel and two packs of Jap cigarettes each."

In August 1944, the marines were shipped out of Palawan with approximately 200 other prisoners for shipment to Manila and Formosa.

There were more than 200 American officers and enlisted men left at the camp in Palawan when the marines sailed to Manila for the trip to Formosa.

In Manila harbor they were loaded on a freighter. It was a hot morning in August. There were 1500 prisoners in the two holds of the ship.

"Each hold," said Preslar, "would have been big enough for 400 men to sit down in. There were about 750 in each, jammed together. We were standing up.

"There was one toilet bucket for all the men in the hold. Most of the men had dysentery. So you can figure out for yourself what that place was like at the end of the first day.

"This was the first time we had an idea of how close American forces were. I saw Nips on deck wearing life belts, looking nervous. They'd never worn life belts before.

Three men eat noon chow in their prison barracks. But this is not regular prison fare; they are eating rations dropped by B-29s.

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"We got two meals a day. A little bit of raw rice—*lugao*, they call it—and about an inch of soup in a mess cup once a day.

"The heat was terrific, and the hatch covers were kept battened down all day. It hurt to breathe. There were only two long cracks in the hatch cover, and the only air we got was from them. But the crowding was worst of all. I tied myself to a bulkhead. You know how they used to put people in the stocks in New England back in the old days, for punishment? I got up there and got myself into that position. It was a hell of a lot better than being down there, with everyone else. It's the only way I got any sleep. I'd hang there like that, and every now and then I'd pass out and get some sleep.

"Every morning a Nip would stick his head down the hatch and tell us to shake the man next to us. If he didn't move, he'd probably be dead, and they'd haul him to deck and dump him over the side. That made a little more room for the rest of us. The poor guys were killing each other just for more space. It was the damndest thing I ever saw. A half dozen guys were killed by their buddies that way. One guy would strangle another one, and they'd haul him up on deck. It was like slow motion. Everybody was so weak they could hardly raise a hand. And one guy would put his hands around a guy's neck and choke him. The victim would die quick. Maybe he would have died anyway in a little while, naturally.

"I saw a soldier stand there and watch another guy strangle his brother. He didn't do a thing. He just stood there and stared, while his brother was murdered.

"There were 40 ships in the convoy when we started. We were on an old ship without any cargo. I guess that's why we weren't sunk. The convoy was attacked by subs three times. More than 20 of the ships were sunk.

"The subs forced us to put into Hong Kong, and I saw my first American air raid there. The hatches were battened down as usual, but I saw the planes come over. There were four-motored jobs on top and two-motored on the bottom. It looked good. We all had given up hope of living, and we hoped that we'd get hit. We didn't, though. We heard the bombs exploding and knew they were doing some damage. The Nips covered the cracks, and I couldn't see anything. But I could hear them.

"We just sat in that harbor for about 10 days, and then we put out to sea again in another convoy for Formosa. It was a three-day trip, and we were attacked again. Out of the 40 ships that had been with the original convoy, only five reached Formosa. We were in the Toroko camp in November. The weather was cold, and the natives said it was an unusual winter. They always say that, wherever we go. Back in the States, they say the same damn thing. By the time we had gotten to Hong Kong, we'd been dehydrated. I'd stopped sweating. About 150 men died on that trip in our hold."

At the Toroko camp, the marines found a new kind of commanding officer. Each prisoner was issued four heavy blankets and they slept on mats of rice straw. They got three meals a day and pork at least once a week. Preslar did farm work, so he ate well, and Pitts worked in a sugar mill.

"The Nip commandant didn't allow the guards to beat anybody," said Pitts.

"I couldn't get used to it. But instead of beatings he'd send us to the guardhouse naked, and we'd have to stay there for five days. The weather was a little above freezing, which was lucky for the guys who made the guardhouse. I'll take a beating any time. You'd get the cold treatment for things like taking sugar from the mill back to camp or taking vegetables from the farm.

"But I think we actually gained weight at that camp, and I hated to leave it.

"We left Formosa on January 20. You guys were in Luzon then, but we didn't know it. All we ever got were rumors, and we had no way of tracing anything down. The closest thing to real news we got was on Honshu last March. A couple of Aussies who were taken from a Hong Kong camp told us that the Americans and British were racing the Russians for Berlin. That meant the war in Europe was nearly over, and that the war over here was going to get everybody's full attention, and maybe we'd be loose in a couple of years or so. Anyway, it was a big boost to morale, and we needed plenty of boosting. We'd just gotten down into the hold when the Navy dive bombers came over. There were a lot of transports in the harbor, and there were plenty of Jap destroyers around, covering the ships.

"A Grumman dove down. It looked as though it were right on top of us. I don't know whether he was diving for us or not. He dove right through that flak ceiling, released his bomb and shot up, clipping about a foot off a mast. We thought that the forward end of the ship was hit when the explosion came. It was that close. I was knocked flat. But it missed by about five feet."

The first stop for the prison transport was Moji on Kyushu Island. It was a POE for Jap troops, and the port area was crowded with them. Each had full field equipment, and long pieces of bamboo had been tied on each rifle and carbine. An interpreter explained that this was to prevent the weapons from going to the bottom in case of a sinking. The date was February 7, and it was cold.

"We went ashore half frozen," Pitts said.

"Preslar and I had each a jacket and a pair of wool pants. I didn't have any shoes, and Preslar's were practically useless, the soles worn half through.

"There was snow on the ground and on the mountain slopes, and it looked like a blizzard was coming up. It was about 8 A.M.

"Half the prisoners had no shoes. No one had any socks. We had some British soldiers with us who had been captured in Hong Kong and picked up when we came through from the Philippines to Formosa. They had had overcoats, once. Good, heavy overcoats. They were standing there, shivering and half naked now. They said the Japs had taken their overcoats. Because it would have been bad on the morale of the Nips to see the enemy so well dressed, the Japs had explained.

"On the Honshu side, we climbed on passenger trains. It surprised hell out of us. Real passenger trains. Not box cars. Most of the guys got seats, and the rest slept on the floor. There was plenty of room to lay down. And at that stage of the game, we were satisfied with a place to lay."

The two marines were sent to Camp Wakanahama near Osaka. The name sounds like a New England summer camp for American boys, and, compared with some of the other places for Allied PWs, it apparently was. There were 200 prisoners in the camp, mostly Americans, with a sprinkling of British, Aussies and Chinese. The prisoners were divided into details, with 40 men to a detail. One worked shoveling coal, another loaded scrap at a steel mill, others unloaded railroad cars or were stevedores at the docks.

The men who handled food cargoes managed to get enough to eat, but the prisoners working the steel mills had rough going, living off what was issued.

"The Jap commander's idea of curing malnutrition was to give a man an extra inch of watery soup for breakfast, or a spoonful of beans," Preslar said, "And when the poor guy still wouldn't show any improvement, the Nip would blow his top. He'd slap hell out of the guy and scream:

" 'I feed you plenty extra soup and beans three days, and still you no good!' "

The marines saw their first B-29 raid in March. The guards packed all the prisoners into the barracks, closed the shutters and promised immediate execution to anyone who was caught watching the planes through the shutter cracks or making anything resembling happy noises. The raid wrecked half of Kobe and Osaka. It burned everything immediately around the prison camp.

"It burned to within 50 yards all around the fence of the camp," Preslar declared, "but only one building in the camp was destroyed. There were no casualties, though."

Next day, the prisoners were transferred to Maribara in the foothills of the mountains. The camp ran parallel with a railroad and is situated in agricultural country.

"The commander found out I was a bugler, somehow, and put me to work," said Pitts. "I blew nothing but Jap calls, but I learned them fast, and I had a pretty easy time until we finally left and came here."

Then in August came the news of the peace offer. It was a week late, but Preslar said one week more or less didn't make much difference after all the time they had waited. When the prisoners arrived at their first camp in Honshu, the Jap commander had an interview with each one in turn. There was an interpreter in the office.

One set of questions was asked of each prisoner:

Who do you think will win the war?

Each gave the same answer: "The United States."

"Why?"

Again they gave the same answer: "The United States production will be too much for you."

"We never had the slightest doubt that the United States would win in time," Preslar said, "not even in the worst time in the Philippines and after the surrender of Corregidor.

"I guess we all, at one time or another, thought that we wouldn't live through it, individually.

"But we knew the United States would win."

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Overseas Brides

Most marriages between GIs and girls overseas have turned out well; the big problem is getting the brides transport to the U. S.

By Sgt. JONATHAN KILBOURN
YANK Staff Writer

If the band strikes up "Here Comes the Bride" when an Army transport docks in the U.S. these days, no one can accuse the musicians of not knowing the score. For many a U.S. Army ship or commercial passenger vessel arrives carrying a batch of GI brides.

They don't carry enough to satisfy the soldier and sailor husbands, however. So far, only some 10,000 foreign-born war brides have entered the U. S., and more than 60,000 GIs married girls overseas. There's no telling how many more have become engaged.

The brides come from practically every part of the world where American troops have been stationed, but the problems they face as newcomers to the U. S. are much the same. All of them must adjust themselves to the customs and conventions of a new world. Considering the many difficulties that every overseas marriage poses, the number of such marriages that seem successful is pretty remarkable.

It is probably worth pointing out, however, that the comparatively few unhappy unions can be very sad affairs.

"My son was engaged to a girl he had gone through school with," explained one mother-in-law who found herself involved in one of these unhappy marriages. "They had the same interests, and she's a beautiful, intelligent girl. They had great plans . . . But then, while he was overseas, this happened."

The mother is making the best of what she considers a bad thing but says that her son's overseas bride seems to feel that American life is all leisure and won't lift a finger to help around the house or even mind her own baby.

It's possible, of course, that part of the trouble is of the mother-in-law's making. Parents-in-law often seem to find it difficult to accept their sons' wives. The manners, habits and speech of another land sometimes set up an immediate prejudice which is hard to overcome. But more often, particularly in the case of English-speaking brides, the trouble is on the other side. Few English, Scottish or Irish girls or those from "Down Under" realize before they arrive in the U. S. that the American melting pot hasn't always dissolved foreign groups into an English-speaking whole.

One English girl stuck it out in Brooklyn's Little Italy for two months, only to give it up as a bad job at last because, she said, she couldn't even understand what her in-laws were saying.

"They spoke Italian all the time," she declared. "My mother-in-law doesn't know any English—she had to point when she wanted me to do something. Maybe the food was good, but I'd never eaten anything like it. And I always thought they resented that I wasn't of their faith."

Where the living-with-in-laws arrangement works out unsatisfactorily, religious reasons are often a primary cause of failure. From their distant vantage-points the boys sometimes don't remember the rigid religious orthodoxy of the folks back home. And so far, all too seldom have they been home themselves at the right time to help the situation out.

There have been a few cases, too, where racial reasons caused marital upsets. Mixed marriages which were successful in Britain have run into trouble when the GIs brought their wives back home to live.

Lack of understanding of the American scene —misunderstandings about their husbands' finacial state, all sorts of educational, economic, social and even political differences—may play a part when a GI overseas marriage goes on the rocks.

One city girl arrived in Oklahoma and couldn't take the country. She said her husband's people lived in a "shack." Welfare workers in the East are still wondering about another former city girl who, when she traveled to Kansas City, found her farmer-parents-in-law had gone all-out in an attempt to welcome her and taken an all-day bus ride from their place in Nebraska in order to meet her. After two days on the farm, the girl came back East in tears. Two days later she changed her mind again and entrained for the Midwest to make another go of it. So far as the welfare people know, she's still there.

Basically, most of the problems which come up when overseas brides meet their new families and new environments could be solved by a little diplomacy if it were not for two factors: the average age of the girls is about 20, and their husbands are usually still away. Many of the girls lack maturity, and orienting themselves without their husbands' help is a pretty tough job.

Just the same, social workers say, their very youth is a factor in their favor—or will be in the long run. They are still impressionable, their manners and habits are still open to change, and to most of them being in America is an adventure. For most, everything will be set aright when their GI comes home.

Meanwhile, they dream of their own old homes, of course. Practically every one of them is homesick in the worst sort of way. A good number of them, however, are either already mothers or soon expect to be, and that helps give them something to think about and plan for and takes their minds off home.

In the cities, most of the girls have jobs. Since a good many of them come from cities themselves, the job of readjustment has been a comparatively easy one. They are more readily accepted and often find friends from home.

Typical of the girls who have made a place for themselves in the business life of a big community, pending their husbands' return from overseas, is pretty, 21-year-old May Jones Romano, formerly of London, who used to be a worker in England's Women's Land Army.

Mrs. Romano met her husband, Cpl. Joseph T. Romano, at a canteen "for the forces" in Dummow, Essex. "Another GI was bothering my girl friend," as Mrs. Romano tells the story, "and Joe kindly came over and put a stop to it."

They were married a year later, in April 1944, and soon after that Cpl. Romano went on to France and Germany. Mrs. Romano hasn't seen him since. Now a clerk in a big New York City bank, she likes it in America.

Even more Americanized is Joan Irene Langrick Kane, 25, formerly of Sherwood Forest, Nottingham, and wife of Cpl. Harry Kane of the Bronx. Mrs. Kane has been working in a war plant, talks "American," and roots for the Brooklyn Dodgers. "I'm not patriotic," she says, "except about the Infantry. I'd die for the American Infantry."

Frida Prechev, once a resident of Tunis, finds it easy to like Americans but hard to speak English.

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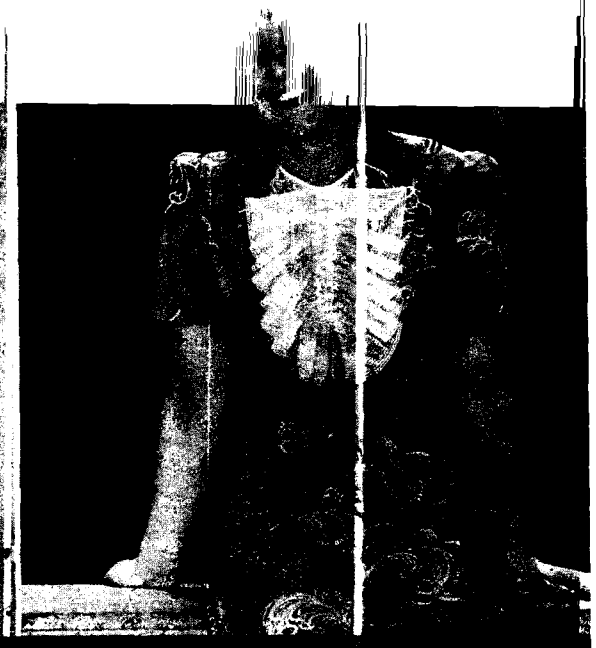
Another office worker [illegible] Sheila Hughes of Woolwich, England, now the wife of Pvt. Harold F. Cerney. The 24-year-old Mrs. Cerney used to be with the British Air Ministry and met her husband during a 1943 air raid in an air-raid shelter at Charing Cross Station, London.

The great majority of overseas brides—about 90 percent of them—come from the British Isles and the Antipodes. But they aren't necessarily the ones who find it easiest to get used to America. For sloe-eyed Frida Soria Prechev, 19, wife of Pvt. Ben Prechev of Long Beach, Long Island, much of the last few years meant desert war. A resident of Hamlif, Tunis, she knew the Nazis well: over a period of six months they lived in villas near her home and fought and played, but, she says, left her alone because "they were, I think you say 'repulsive,' and I did not see them more than I could help."

Mrs. Prechev, like most GI wives, says she met her husband "at a party." Her only regret is that because he speaks French so well, "I have not the chance to learn the English." Although she admits to being homesick from time to time and plans to visit Tunisia after the war, she is all in favor of the U. S. She summed up her feelings this way: "America—I like it very much. The women are so nice to you. *Very* much I like the men."

Mrs. Philip Mohan, holding Mike, seven-month-old son, met her husband "Down Under," in Sydney, Australia.



Mrs. Joseph T. Romano met her husband in England, waits for him in New York.

OFFICERS' overseas brides generally have more money to live on and therefore have one problem less to contend with. Otherwise their reactions are much the same. Blonde, 24-year-old Mrs. Sylvia Morgan Mohan—"Jimmy" to her friends—is the wife of Naval Lt. Philip Mohan, whom she met in Sydney, Australia. Now living in North Tarrytown, N. Y., she is the mother of seven-month-old Mike—the "spit 'n' image," she says, of her husband. Mrs. Mohan still gets dimes mixed up with nickels, but otherwise she's quite acclimated now.

Another officer's wife is 25-year-old Joan Calvin Rider, wife of the Navy's Port Director at Bremen, Germany. Mrs. Rider, who hails from Portobello, Edinburgh, Scotland, first met her husband in an official capacity. She was with British censorship. Adjustment was easy for her. For five-and-a-half years she worked with Americans, and she has many friends who married Americans.

While they sweat out their husbands' return, the biggest problem most of the girls face is lack of such friends. Few of them know other girls who have come to the U. S., except for the ones now scattered over the continent who accompanied them here. The nicest in-laws in the world can't take the place of a confidante.

To provide brides with the companionship of other brides and of American women, and to give them a helping hand in solving a variety of everyday problems—from finding a home or a job to aiding them with shopping, rationing, cooking and budget problems—the English Speaking Union has embarked on a large-scale program under which Overseas Brides Clubs are being set up in its 35 chapters throughout the U. S. The clubs cater to all brides—EM or officer, English-speaking or not.

Typical of the clubrooms is that in New York City. Here, in addition to a lounge, is a kitchenette where brides can brew their own tea, a sewing room with machines on which they can learn to stitch and—most important — women with whom they can talk. The welfare problems of the brides are referred to the Red Cross.

One of the biggest problems concerning overseas brides is what to do with them while they await embarkation for the U.S. Few of them know much about the country except for what the movies have told them, and many have a rather exaggerated idea of what they will see. One English girl said she expected every "pub" to look like New York City's Grand Central Terminal. Another thought there were swimming pools on practically every block.

During the last few years of war the Office of War Information did a good job in helping to prepare waiting brides and fiancees for what they would find here when they arrived. Its British Division in particular, helped arrange lectures, civics classes and so forth to explain to the young Americans-to-be what America is like.

An example of the U. S. agency's work is a pamphlet it issued in conjunction with the British edition of *Good Housekeeping*, entitled "A Bride's Guide to the U.S.A." This attempts, among other things, to explain American humor. Here's an example of how the pamphlet does it:

"There are some kinds of spoken humor that you must learn to take calmly . . . kidding is perhaps [hard] to get used to but you have to learn. It may consist of mimicking to see if you 'can take it.' This variety is a subtle form of flattery as it makes you the center of attention and assumes that you can laugh at yourself, a quality that is much admired.

"Kidding also includes using insults as a sign of affection, but Americans, not being noticeably angelic, also use insults as a sign of anger."

The pamphlet advises: "Later you may learn to kid back, but don't try it till you know how."

The booklet includes chapters on making friends in a small town, on city life, homemaking, manners and so forth. Its invaluable glossary points out that the British word for baby's diaper — napkin — is the American equivalent of the British "serviette"; that wash rag is the limp U. S. equivalent of the more interesting British "face flannel"; that the word for "tram" is streetcar; that in the U. S. a "jug" is not necessarily a pitcher.

Even when the brides-to-be don't learn much from courses given them to while away their free time, they find that merely having something to do is a big help. For the girls are often unpopular with their own people. Sometimes—though seldom—their own families object to their marriages, but their countrymen in the service are never pleased.

Nonetheless, within a few weeks after the Yanks landed at almost any point overseas, local newspapers would begin carrying accounts of GI weddings. They have been doing so ever since.

Theater commanders found it necessary to rule that all such marriages must have an official Army OK. In some cases—India is an example—they were flatly forbidden, and most other commands insisted on a minimum six-month engagement period before approving any nuptials.

In spite of such delays, the marrying continued and the number of women queuing up in front of U. S. consular and diplomatic offices abroad, to inquire about the quickest way to get to the U.S., continued to increase. Recently more than 1,000 British wives of American servicemen stormed a London hall where a U. S. Embassy spokesman was trying to explain the reasons for the delay in sending them to join their husbands in the U. S. They raised such a row that they drowned out the speaker.

FOR the end of the war and the return to the U. S. of thousands of soldiers and sailors has given the overseas-brides story a new twist. Before VJ-Day the biggest problem it presented was getting the GIs back to join their waiting wives. Now there are more than 40,000 husbands in the U. S. waiting for their brides.

As the pace of demobilization increases, the job of getting the wives—and children—to their new home becomes increasingly difficult. First priority must, of course, go to servicemen, not their dependents. To speed up the process, the Army, the State Department and Congress are now considering changes in procedure.

Meanwhile, the WD's recently-issued Circular No. 245, dealing with "Transportation of Dependents from Overseas," still stands.

Pending changes, this is how a GI who wants to get his gal back home goes about it:

1) He obtains from the nearest consular—or, if in the U. S., immigration—authorities a nonquota passport visa for an alien wife and/or children (wives of American citizens may be admitted to the U. S. on a nonquota status).

2) In order to obtain transportation at Government expense, he makes written application through his CO, or direct, if discharged, to the commanding general of the theater in which his dependents are situated, for approval and assignment of priority.

3) He indicates on his application his present status and address; his organization assignment if still in the military service; the name, age and address of his dependents and their destination in the U.S.

An application will not be formally accepted until other requirements for entry into the U. S. (excluding actual issuance of the entrance visa) have been met.

The alien fiancee of an American citizen must follow the same procedure as any other citizen of the country of which she is a native to enter the U. S. and in most cases be admitted as a quota immigrant under the quota of that country. In some cases the State Department will authorize the issuance of temporary visitor's visas to the fiancees to enter the U. S. to get married.

A fiancee must arrange her own transportation and travel at her own expense as a commercial passenger. Application may be made through a soldier's CO to the commanding general of the theater for assistance in arranging transportation when such transportation becomes available.

A bride or a bride-to-be follows this procedure:

1) She registers, if a British citizen, for the passport and exit permit required by law, or, in other countries, for whatever similar papers may be required by local law.

2) She submits to the American consul evidence of financial support (generally speaking, a simple letter from the GI's CO will do the trick).

3) She abides by the laws of her country by collecting any police records, her birth certificate, etc., all of which the consulate will tell her how to get.

4) She takes a medical exam given by a U. S. Public Health Service officer to make sure that she is free from communicable diseases, tuberculosis and so forth.

A GI's child is considered an American citizen and requires merely an American passport to get into the U. S.

The overseas brides must wade through a morass of red tape to reach America, but all of them are tremendously excited at the prospects of the future. All of them arrive hoping that the words of the OWI-*Good Housekeeping* "Guide" will prove true:

"You will be welcome in America, for you, too, have taken your chance and embarked on a great adventure. Americans admire courage. They will wish you good luck and happiness in your new life in the New World."

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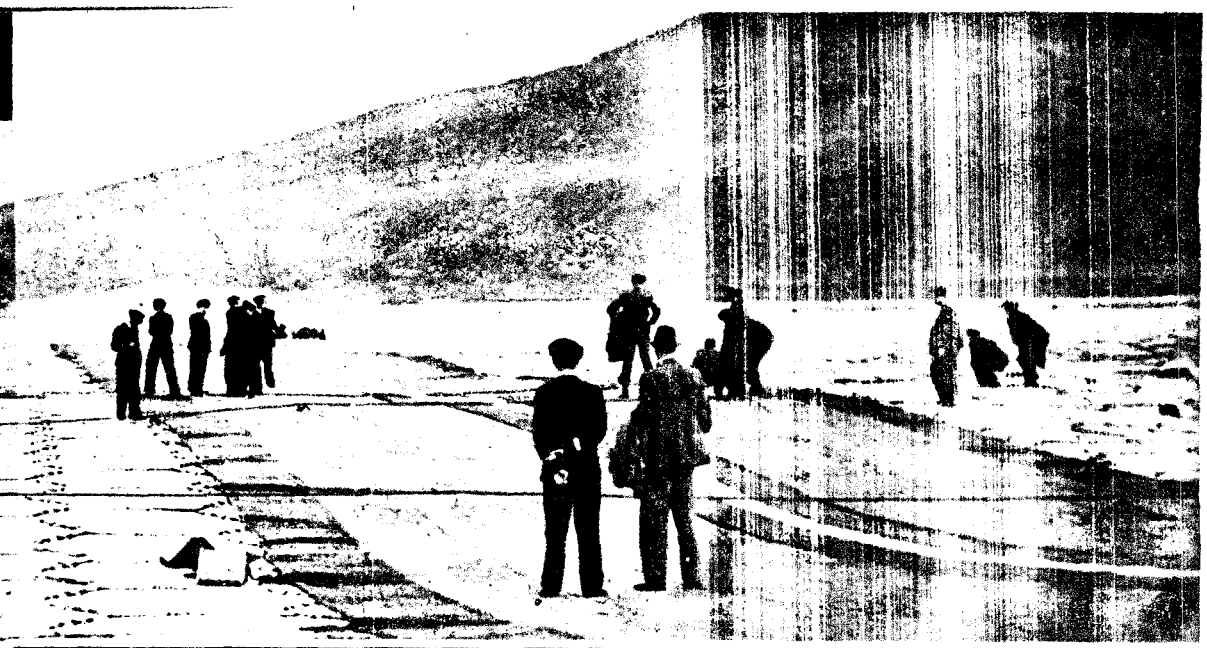
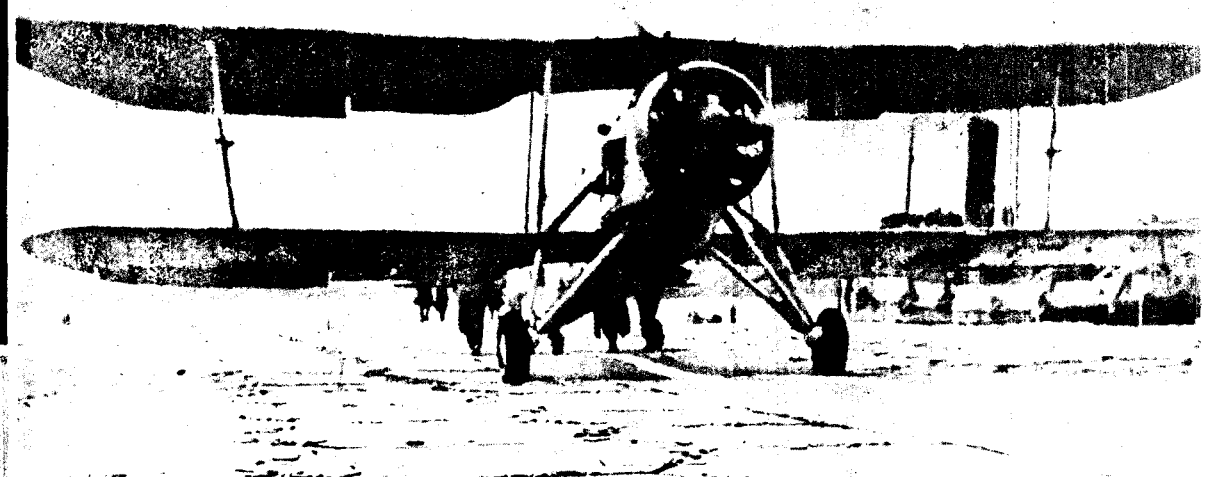
Lily, the floating airfield, rolls with the motion of waves, but it will still allow a naval plane to land and to take off.



FLOATING FIELDS and SWIMMING TANKS

THIS has been a war of gadgets, and hardly a week passes without one of the Allies revealing one of its censored pet projects. The British take the spotlight on this page with two of their trickier improvisations—a floating airfield and a method for making tanks swim. The floating airfield is a big brother of the famous Swiss Roll, a long, narrow, floating strip on which vehicles could be driven from ship to shore through water. Lily Pond, the official name for the field, is simply a floating pad of flexible metal and composition, 520 feet long and 60 feet wide. The swimming tanks, Donald Ducks, used on the Normandy beachhead and in the Rhine crossings, were regular tanks, waterproofed and fitted with propellers in the rear and canvas screening all around. They could be launched offshore to approach a beach, showing only a foot or two above water and making a small and difficult target.

A British tank driver wears a modified-type submarine-escape apparatus as added protection for sea-tanking.



A British Swordfish naval plane lands on the floating Lily. Lily gives a little under the weight of the plane, but it is still sturdy enough to support a take-off. The dimple helps slow down landing planes.

Donald Ducks, their rubberized sides still up, show their speed on land in Germany after a crossing of the Rhine.

A Sherman tank, refitted Donald-Duck style, rumbles up into shallow water near the shore of the River Adige in Italy.

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GIs of the 5th Ranger Battalion know what they want when they get home and out. Peace and quiet are high on their lists.

Ranger Sgt. Lee M. Brown.

Ranger Reconversion

By Sgt. DEBS MYERS
YANK Staff Correspondent

MARKT-GRAFING, GERMANY — The Rangers stood quietly in the streets of the quiet little town and talked small talk about big things.

This was the Fifth Ranger Battalion, a good outfit. They had hit the Normandy beaches on H-Hour, D-Day. They had traveled a long way since, and most of the miles had been hard to come by.

Within a few hours they would be heading home. So mostly they talked about home. They thought home would be pretty good.

These were all young men, many of them barely out of their teens. Most of them never had been to college. They had been too busy becoming post-graduates in all the more practical techniques of homicide.

As the hot sun slanted down on the little town, the Rangers huddled in the shade and talked casually about doing the things they had wanted to do for a long time—buying gaudy neckties and pin-striped suits; about malted milks and bourbon whisky; about getting jobs and getting girls.

The Rangers weren't sharing the fear of some people back in the States that it would be a long and painful process for combat soldiers to readjust themselves to civilian ways. Just give them that discharge paper and the chance to buy a blue suit. That was all. After that, the Rangers said, the process of becoming a civilian again would take them at least five minutes.

Had the war changed the Rangers? Had combat given them a tough, mean outlook? Had war —as some people back in the States feared— made soldiers like the Ranger ruthless and hard to get along with?

John Hodgson delivered special-delivery letters in Washington, D. C., before he came into the Rangers. Now he is a 25-year-old master sergeant with 88 points and an awful yen to get back to his wife named Burnlee. (Burnlee is one helluva name, says Sgt. Hodgson, so he calls her Sis.) Hodgson doesn't plan to go back to his old job. Instead he will become a mortician.

The Rangers rib Hodgson about this. They think it is kind of funny that a guy trained in about four dozen ways of killing people should now start laying out dead people.

"My dad was a mortician for 25 years," says Hodgson. "Now he's dead, but my mother owns a mortuary at Rock Island, Ill. It's a good business. What I want is a quiet life. I don't want any trouble or any noise. I ask you: What's quieter than a mortuary?"

Hodgson, who was upped from platoon sergeant to first sergeant six days after the Normandy landings, believes the war has had an effect on most of the Rangers, but not in the way that some people in the States worry about.

"For one thing," he said, "we have learned how important it is to depend on the other guy. Teamwork is what counts. All the time I see soldiers helping one another. Any time our guys get a package of food from home, they divvy it up. When you're going along the road in a car and you see another soldier stranded without gas, you give him gas. And in combat helping one another is about five times as important as anywhere else. I think maybe the civilians can learn a few things from us about getting along together."

Hodgson made it clear that he figured some soldiers would come out of the war a little wild-eyed, but he thought those soldiers would be a mighty small fraction of the total.

"The Rangers will be all right," he said. "It may be that some of the younger guys will have a little trouble settling down, but most young guys have trouble that way. This outfit hasn't stayed in any one spot for longer than four weeks since D-Day. We have got pretty used to traveling, and some of the younger guys will come out with itchy feet. Some of them will start college and then drop out before too long. They will get a little bored, and their feet will get to itching. But, hell, there's nothing much wrong with that. As far as these guys going back to civilian life a bunch of toughs, as some people are afraid might happen, that's all crap."

SGT. James Mercer, a 21-year-old rifleman from Dupo, Ill., thinks he probably will go back to his old job as yard clerk with the Missouri Pacific Railroad at Dupo, maybe just long enough to save a little money.

"I may want to go to college," he said, "either the University of Illinois or Washington University at St. Louis. I won't know for a while yet."

Mercer hopes that people back home won't be so tired of the war that they will want to forget everything that happened in it.

Morris Mooberry, a 26-year-old master sergeant, has one major ambition when he gets out of the Army. He wants to sit down across the table from his wife, Opal, and eat as much of Opal's cooking as there is food on the table, and he wants plenty of food on the table, including big dishes of meat and potatoes, with ice cream for dessert.

He plans to take back his old job in the shops of the Caterpillar Tractor Company at Peoria, Ill. Maybe he will study diesel engineering on the side. He hasn't made up his mind about that yet. He belonged to the CIO union at the plant, and he believes in unions. He was against wartime strikes, and says he believes that most of the wartime strikers should have been put in the Army.

Mooberry has had a belly-full of the Army, of excitement and of seeing the world. He is ready to settle down in Peoria, or maybe go back to his home town of Eureka, Ill., and not move out of Illinois for the rest of his life.

Mooberry believes that the people back home will forget within a week after he is home that he ever was in the Army.

"I hope they do," he says, "I don't believe it will do much good to talk about the war with civilians. I don't think war is something that anyone can know about unless they're actually in it. I would just rather forget I ever was in the Army except on those times when I get together with other guys from the outfit.

"The Fifth Ranger Battalion is talking about getting together once a year for a big blow-off, and I hope we can do it. We'll have a hell of a time. Probably we'll look back and get to thinking we actually liked the damned Army."

Alex Barker, a 20-year-old T-3 from Johnstown, Pa., is a medic who won the Distinguished Service Cross for taking a cart carrying four wounded men through heavy fire on D-plus-2. He wants to go to college and study medicine.

Roger Neighborgall, a 21-year-old staff sergeant from Huntington, W. Va., has had three years of medicine at the University of Indiana, and he plans to finish his studies and become a doctor.

S/Sgt. David Nelson, 21, who lives on a farm near Santa Cruz, Calif., plans to go to the University of California and learn forest and game conservation. "It's a quiet life," he says.

That's the way it is with most of the Rangers. The men who last February cut the Irsch-Zerf road and fought for nine days, cut off, behind enemy lines, are ready to take it easy. They have been good soldiers and good Rangers. They think being good civilians will be a lead-pipe cinch.

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The Navy now reveals how its Underwater Demolition Teams swam ashore on enemy-held beaches to prepare for invasion.

By Sgt. HARRY J. TOMLINSON
YANK Staff Correspondent

UDT boat traveling at full speed demonstrates by picking up swimmer.

PADDLEFOOT COMMANDOS

MAUI, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS—Had the Jap commander at Iwo Jima sent men down to patrol the beaches on D-Day-minus-2, they might have run across a small, stocky American sailor wearing only swimming trunks and trying to light a cigarette. The sailor was Dave Mack EM2c of Cleveland, Ohio, who had boasted that he would smoke a cigarette on Iwo before invasion day. To keep the record straight, it must be reported that Dave didn't get the cigarette lit; his matches had become damp during his 1,500-yard swim to the beach and wouldn't burn. And Iwo's beach that day was a little too hot to wait for matches to dry out.

Dave was one of some 80 Navy swimmers who went in under heavy fire to make a thorough reconnaissance of the Iwo beaches before D-Day. At Iwo they were following the pattern set by underwater demolition teams at every Pacific invasion from Kwajelein on. Theirs was a threefold job: to make reconnaissance, blow out obstacles and mines on the beaches and blast channels through the coral for landing craft—all before D-Day; to guide landing craft safely to the beaches; and to clean up the beaches and prepare harbors for larger ships after D-Day.

The work of the underwater demolition teams was hidden by the best veil of secrecy the Navy was able to devise. But marines and soldiers who hit the beaches on D-Day knew that someone had been there before them. The Japs also knew that whatever kind of obstacles or mines they put along the beaches would disappear before the invasion craft started in on D-Day. Now, with the Jap capitulation, the story of the men who made a habit out of working long hours on well-protected enemy beaches can be told.

There was no such thing as a typical operation for an underwater demolition team. On each island their job was different, but no matter how heavy the Jap fire or how rough the surf or how many Jap obstacles had to be blown out of the water, they never failed to have the beaches ready. At Iwo they swam in almost a mile to discover that the beaches sloped so sharply that the Japs had been unable to erect barricades against landing craft. However, they did locate many Jap gun emplacements that had not been revealed by aerial reconnaissance. Within minutes after they returned to their ships the location of the guns was radioed to the fleet, which began pounding the Jap positions from long range. Despite heavy machinegun and mortar fire, only one of the UDT men was lost in the Iwo reconnaissance mission. There were some close calls, though. Leslie H. Goode S1c of Dayton, Ohio, got to within 50 yards of the beach before he saw Jap snipers taking pot shots at him. By swimming long distances under water Goode stayed out of the paths of the Jap bullets. Once when he came up for air he saw a Jap rifleman disgustedly throw his piece on the ground and shake his fist at the swimmers.

When the swimmers got back to their ships they were blackened with the smoke of shells that landed close. The one casualty was a swimmer who disappeared—he just never came back. Eight men were wounded when mortar shells made direct hits on two of the boats which were waiting to pick up the swimmers. The heaviest casualties came on the night before D-Day—when the job was completed and the men of Team 15 were back on their assault-personnel destroyer (APD) and heading out to meet the Marine transports to guide them into the beaches. A Jap Betty picked up the phosphorescent wake of the ship and sent a 500-pound magnetic bomb straight down into the mess hall crowded with men playing cards, smoking and talking in the excited way that men always talk when they have just come safely through a harrowing experience. Twenty-eight men of UDT-15 died there in the U.S.S. *Blessman's* mess hall, along with 12 men from the ship's company.

"It was always a relief to get into the water," claimed one UDT veteran. "You always felt safer. A man in the water makes a poor target. A lot of us brought back Jap bullets fired at us while we were swimming. As the bullets went dead in the water and started to sink, we would dive after them so we'd have something for souvenirs."

IT wasn't souvenirs the boys were thinking about when they volunteered for the underwater demolition work. Whether they believed it or not, they were told that it was a suicide job—that it was for "prolonged, hazardous, overseas duty." Back in May 1943 the Navy was faced with the urgent problem of training men for underwater demolition work in preparation for the series of invasions that had been planned for the Pacific. The first call for volunteers went out. Men with engineering, "powder," small-boat and swimming experience were asked for, and the Seabees responded. All the early teams—those which saw the greatest amount of action in the Pacific—were made up of Seabees recruited at Camp Perry, Va., and trained there, at Ft. Pierce, Fla., and here at the Navy's Combat Demolition Base on Maui in the Hawaiian Islands. Later teams were composed of volunteers from the fleet, but according to Cmdr. C. T. Christ, a training officer, "to the Seabees must go most of the credit for the successful operations of the first teams and for the excellent training given to the later volunteers."

Most of the old-timers in the outfit—men who have been in on as many as seven different pre-D-Day operations—claim that they are glad they volunteered. According to S. B. (Pete) Smalle MM1c, the only gripe they have is that they were promised they "would never have to pull guard duty and have been pulling it 24 hours a day ever since."

"But just because I say we liked the work," protested a chief who was one of the original volunteers, "don't think we weren't scared. Every time I went in to a Jap-held beach I was scared stiff."

At first, at Kwajelein and Eniwetok and Roi-Namur, reconnaissance was fairly elementary. The swimmers made only rough estimates of water depths, and, while the information was valuable, the Navy needed more precise data. An intensive training program was begun, and the demolitioners became as competent in reconnaissance as in blasting. Among the Seabee volunteers were found men who had drafting or mapmaking experience. They were taught how to record the data which swimmers brought back. A system was devised whereby their charts would be in the hands of the officers and men of the landing forces long before H-Hour. Swimmers spent hours practicing how to estimate the depth of water by sight alone—by hanging straight down in the water and estimating the distance between their feet and the bottom. To make sure they wouldn't forget the water depths by the time they had completed the long swims back to their boats, roughened plexiglass plates were devised. The plates were strapped to their legs, and the depth of the water was recorded on them with a lead pencil.

The swimmers, operating in pairs, would swim in on straight parallel lines, recording depths either by estimate or with sounding leads every few feet. When their information was compiled back on their APD, a complete chart for the landing forces was available. At Leyte some beaches which had been selected for landings were abandoned because the swimmers found the landing craft couldn't get in. At Okinawa, according to a UDT officer, beaches which had been considered unusable were found to be adequate after a reconnaissance.

Only at Guam and Borneo did the underwater demolition teams find obstacles and mines in quantity and depth comparable with those the marines ran into at Tarawa. After the UDT boys got through at Guam the Japs probably became discouraged. They knew that any obstacles they built would be gone by D-Day. But at Guam the obstacles lined the whole 3,000 yards of invasion beach. They were mostly cribs made of coconut logs. Each was about six feet long, five feet wide and three to four feet high. The cribs were filled with loose coral, and each crib was joined to the next by a length of heavy construction cable. On D-minus-7, UDT-3 and UDT-4 began blasting.

MOST of the cribs were built just inside a reef which varied from 50 to 200 yards away from the beaches. The 75-yard-wide reef was covered by not more than a foot and a half of water at high tide and by as little as six inches at low tide. Rubber boats were loaded down with powder and rowed in to the reef. From there it was a race against the Jap snipers. Carrying three

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or four of the 20-pound haversacks of tetrytol, the swimmers ran across the reef toward the obstacles. Once reached, the cribs themselves provided protection from Jap machinegun and rifle fire. It was exhausting work, and as one of their officers put it, "As soon as the men got back from one operation they would flop down on the deck of the ship and sleep until it was time for them to go in again."

Some made as many as 19 trips into the beaches, going in three times a day. Even the supply of two-ounce bottles of brandy that each man was supposed to receive when he returned from a trip to the beaches ran out. Every man who went in to Guam before D-Day gave most of the credit for the successful blasting to the crews of the LCIs which gave fire support. Standing sometimes only a few hundred yards offshore, the LCIs poured a steady hail of fire over the heads of the swimmers as they prepared the charges which blew the obstacles right back into the laps of the Japs. Two hundred men and officers worked for more than 35 hours on the Guam beaches, and not a single man was lost.

The underwater demolition teams always presented the Japs with a dilemma. If the Japs turned all their guns on the swimmers in order to protect their obstacles, they would give away their gun emplacements. If they let the swimmers work, then the beaches would be clear for American landing craft and the odds were that enough troops could be put ashore quickly to make the invasion a success. No matter which way they decided, the Japs lost. At Guam the big guns held their fire, and by D-Day the beaches were clear. "Looked like the Lincoln Highway," according to William A. Willert SF2c of Tulsa, Okla. At Leyte the Japs opened up against the swimmers with everything they had, and as a result destroyers and battlewagons picked off their big-gun emplacements one by one before the invasion began.

It was on one of the beaches at Guam, close to the village of Agat, where on D-Day the marines found a large sign stating in bold black letters, "U. S. MARINES, WELCOME TO USO, GREETINGS FROM UDT-4." Henry L. (Gunner) Green GM2c of Havre, Mont., and two of his buddies helped place it there at 1500 on D-minus-1. UDT-4 had blasted three channels out of the coral leading into the beach and had prepared three separate signs of welcome to the marines. But their CO got wind of the deal and ordered them not to expose themselves just for a joke. But Green managed to slip one of the signs into a rubber boat, and the three men took off for the beach.

"I almost got busted over that," Gunner recalls, "and then to make it worse YANK gives a drunken Seabee credit for putting the sign there. And then when I tried to write to YANK telling them who actually did it, the censor calls me and I got chewed again."

Officers and men agree that the small number of UDT casualties was due to the help of the LCI gunboats and the excellent training the men received. Officers went through exactly the same training as the enlisted men, and both will tell you that it was about the toughest training that the Navy ever devised. The first volunteers had it the roughest. Up at 0500, they were out for an hour of PT by 0530. Then the day got into full swing with a three-and-a-half-mile run to school. School consisted of more exercises, obstacle courses, lugging powder and other such recreational activities—followed by another three-and-a-half-mile run back to the barracks.

A Jap anti-tank mine is prepared for detonation. UDT men get extensive training in handling them.

Lt. (jg) William F. McMullen, a UDT officer, wears the fins and goggles that the teams members use.

UDT men don't agree on which was their toughest operation. Some say Guam; others hold out for Leyte, Lingayen, Iwo or Borneo. Paul R. Lott CCM of Luling, Tex., claims it was Saipan, and he should know. He was in on pre-D-Day operations at Saipan, Tinian, Peleliu, Luzon, Iwo and Okinawa. At Saipan, according to Lott, it wasn't obstacles or Jap mines which gave trouble—it was the heavy Jap fire which blanketed the boats. As the PRs moved toward the beach to let off swimmers for reconnaissance, they were pounded by heavy mortar fire. A fleet bombardment early in the day was supposed to have knocked out most of the Jap shore installations, but still hidden along the shore were 12 well-camouflaged, 60-foot Jap barges which had not even been touched by the bombardment. At frequent intervals the barges would roll back their canvas coverings and spray the PRs and swimmers with mortar and machinegun fire. Despite the unexpected opposition, the swimmers moved in toward the beach and the PRs escaped serious damage by heading into spots where mortar shells had just landed, figuring that they would not hit twice in exactly the same place. The reconnaissance was a success; three good channels through the coral were located, and the swimmers got in far enough to make sure that there were no underwater obstacles and no mines to block the way to the beach. Only at Iwo, claims Chief Lott, did he ever run into anything even comparable with the Jap fire on Saipan on D-minus-1.

At Lingayen Gulf the UDTs ran into *kamikazes*—Jap suicide planes—for the first time. While the Japs were obviously caught by surprise and gave the swimmers no trouble, they did give the UDT boys a hard time as they shelled and bombed the APDs from which the teams operated. And there was always the danger that a *kamikaze* might pick their ships for a target. The APDs were loaded down with powder, and a direct hit with a small bomb would probably have been enough to set off the powder and blow the ship to bits. While the demolitioners handled powder like so many sacks of flour while working, living on a powder keg constantly under fire was nerve-racking.

Although thousands of tons of powder were used by the UDTs in training and operations, there were no large "unscheduled" explosions, just close calls. In the harbor of Manus 10 tons of powder stored on deck caught fire. Experienced powder men were fairly sure that it would not explode, but some of the crew of the ship made a hasty exit over the side of the ship. As one UDT man put it, "Every man who couldn't swim jumped overboard." So in addition to fighting the fire, the men of the demolition team had to rescue those in the water. The fire was finally extinguished by pushing the burning powder over the side.

JUST before D-Day at Iwo one team was busy on a small island several thousand yards offshore, blasting a channel so that landing craft could come in to unload heavy guns for the bombardment of Iwo itself. They had 60 tons of powder spread around under the surface of the water when American Navy planes came over and bombed them. The first bombs missed, and just as the pilots made their turn for another run over their "target," radio contact was established and the flyers were warned that they were bombing Americans.

With the exception of some of the higher ranking officers, all officers and men of the underwater demolition teams were volunteers. Some did it for the pure love of excitement, others for more prosaic reasons. Willy Willert volunteered out of the Seabees for combat demolition because "I was never big enough to do a lot of things that other guys could do, so I joined this outfit so I'd be able to do something they couldn't do." Or take John Richardson BM2c of Ranger, Tex., who claims he got into the organization strictly from hunger. "Honest," he says, "I was in the boat pool down at Turner City on Florida Island and we didn't get enough to eat. We used to catch fish just to get by. So when the chance came to get into a UDT I jumped at it."

Some men volunteered out of the Seabees because they had previous experience with powder and wanted to put their skill to good use. Other Seabees were leery of getting stuck on some forsaken island for months on end without any excitement, and so they volunteered for hazardous duty. John F. Proctor CCM of Eureka, Calif., volunteered because they asked for men with engineering experience and he'd had 17 years of it with the Department of Interior. Around such men the UDTs were built—men with heavy construction or powder or engineering experience. They weren't just kids looking for excitement but experienced men who formed the nucleus for the later teams.

Right now most of them don't look upon their work as having been very dramatic, although they do feel that their jobs were important. Even swimming into enemy-held beaches can get to be a habit if done often enough.

Those who have observed their work at first hand have a different opinion—like the two crew members of an LCI which had been sunk just off the beach at Iwo and were swimming out toward the fleet. They met a couple of UDT swimmers heading toward land. "Where in the hell do you think you're going?" yelled one of the men from the LCI.

"Into the beach," answered the UDT men.

Floating across the water as the demolitioners swam on toward Iwo came the comment of the LCI men: "You crazy sonzabitches!"

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COUNTY FAIR

THE FAIR IN DEERFIELD, N. H., WAS FIRST HELD IN 1877. SGT. REG KENNY'S PHOTOS SHOW MUCH THE SAME THINGS—EXCEPT FOR THE JEEP—AS THEY WOULD HAVE THEN.

A main attraction was the "hoss pullin'." Teams were hitched to a sledge holding 500-pound blocks. This one was trying for the record: 16,300 pounds pulled six fe

William Tuttle of Deerfield was judging the vegetables, and he put the blue ribbon on a "whopper" of a squash. It was a Blue Hubbard and weighed 65 pounds.

There were some mighty fine rabbits at the fair. Samuel Rice (right) Saugus, Mass., was a keen judge and made their owners pretty nervo

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Cattle can't pull as hard as draft horses, but a lot of people were interested in the event all the same. These black and white oxen were pulling 5,000 pounds.

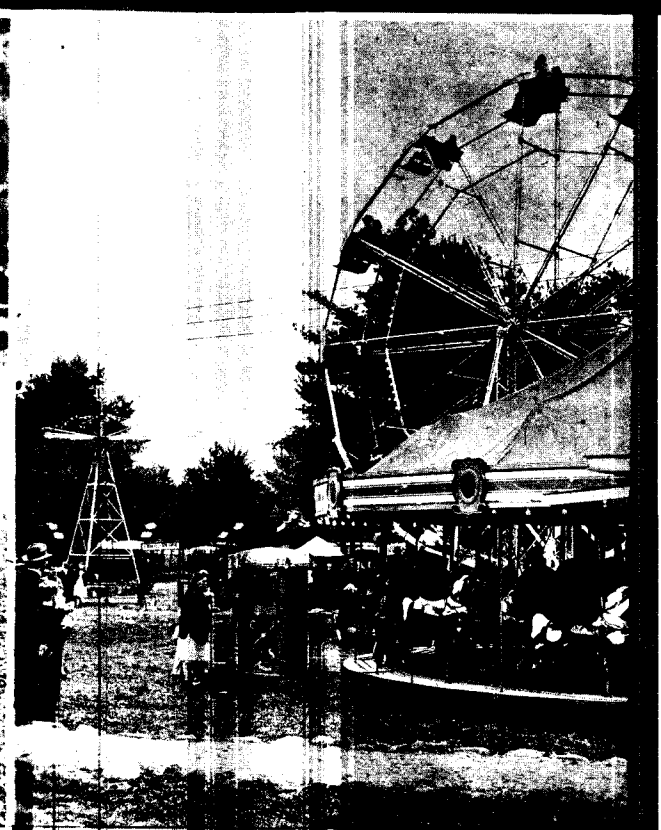
Local kids and their folks put their hearts into this: boys and girls from four neighboring schools competing for trophies at the track meet.

It was a big day for these girls. Beverley Fife (left) drew first prize for a box of eggs, while Ardell Welch and Sheila Donovan got seconds for tomato jars.

Fred Nutter, an ETO veteran and five weeks out, was helping show a prize hog named Miss Strafford, 1,000 pounds and 78 inches in girth.

Polly Straw, 9, of Ma[illegible]chester [illegible] in the horse show in the "egg a[illegible]

[illegible] to give a jeep [illegible] savings stamps.



The fair d[illegible] have [illegible] ways, but [illegible] a fe[illegible]

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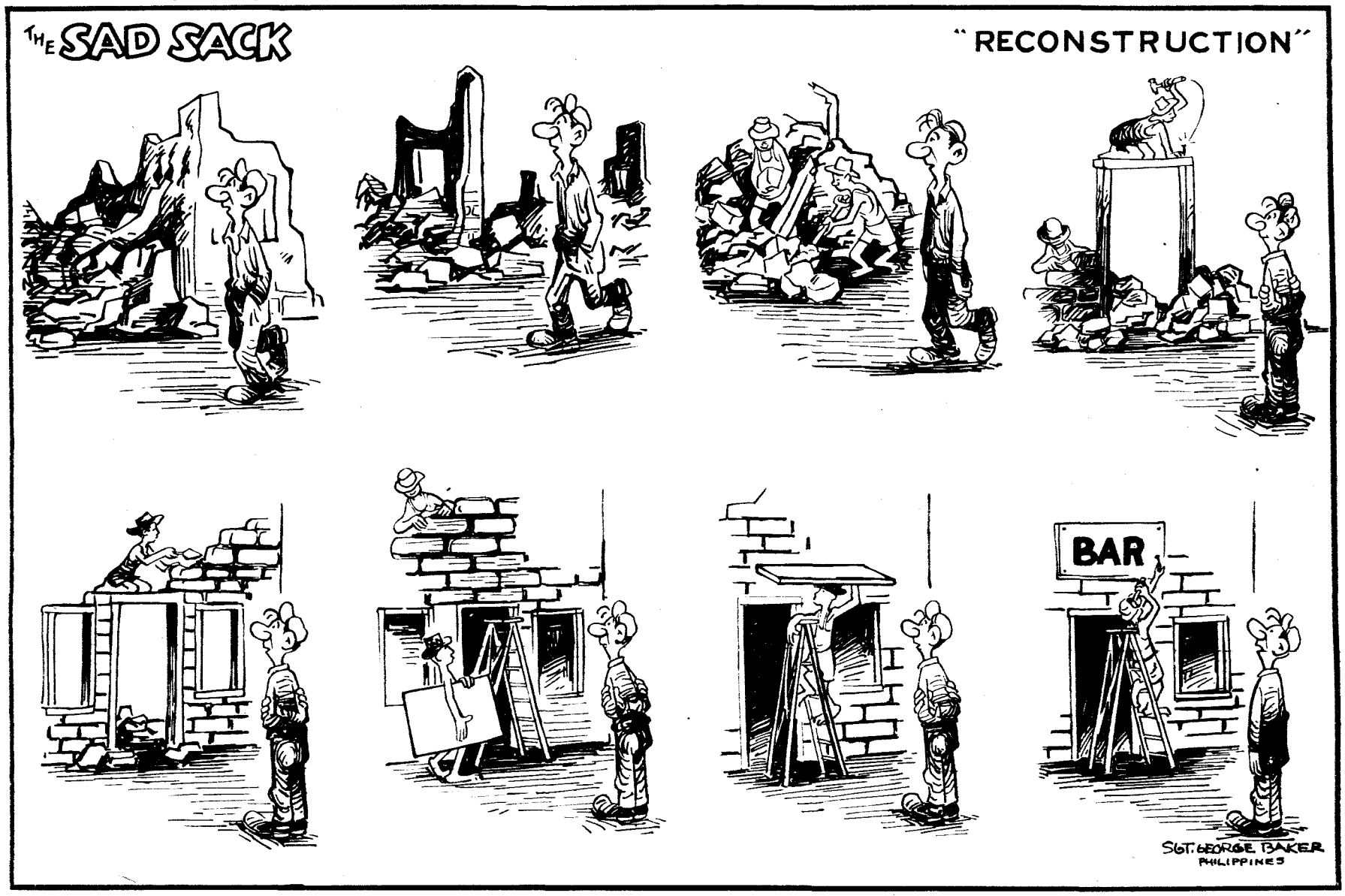


State Laws

Dear YANK:

I was in the WAC for two years. Recently I tried to get a loan to buy a farm, and I was turned down. The reason given was that the law of the state where the land was located does not permit a married woman to enter into such a contract. How can that be a reason for turning down a loan under the GI Bill of Rights?

Minnesota —Ex-Sgt. MARY B. ALLEN

■ The GI Bill of Rights does not change the laws of the various states. Some states do not permit married women to enter into such agreements on their own. However, there is nothing to stop a veteran in your position from selecting land in a state which does not have such restrictive laws. In that way you can become eligible for a loan guarantee.

Free Schooling

Dear YANK:

How soon after a GI gets out of service must he begin taking advantage of the educational benefits of the GI Bill of Rights? As I see it, I will need at least a year to work at a job in order to catch up on my past debts. After that, I would like to go to school for a couple of years. But, unless I can wait a while before starting my schooling, I cannot see how I can get myself started on a solvent basis. What's the score on the schooling?

Britain —Pfc. MARVIN CLINGER

■ A veteran must apply for the educational benefits of the GI Bill of Rights within two years after he is discharged or two years after the officially declared termination of the war, whichever is later. For this purpose, VJ-Day is not the official end of the war. That date will not come until Congress or the President sets it. The official end of World War I did not come until July 1921. Therefore, you should have plenty of time to get your affairs straightened out before going to school.

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

Letters to this department should bear writer's full name, serial number and military address.

Discharges for Age

Dear YANK:

When the WD announced that men over 35 years of age would be discharged if they had two years of service I was a really happy guy. At the time of the announcement I was 36 years old but had only 23 months of service. Now I have over two years of service but I find I am either getting a run-around or the WD was only kidding.

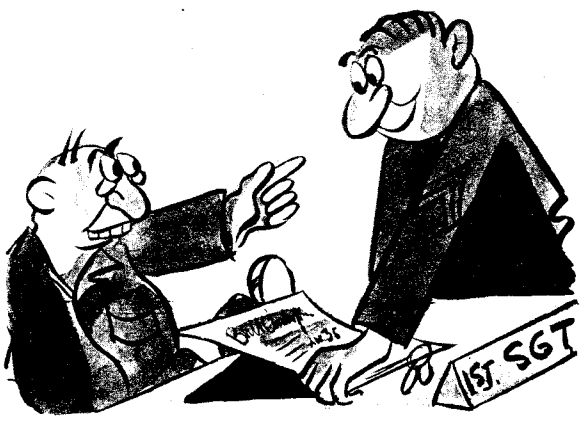
As soon as my two years were completed I went into my orderly room and applied for my discharge. I had just about completed filling out the form the company clerk gave me, when the sergeant in charge took it away from me and said I was out of luck. According to him, the discharge rule applies only to men over 35 who had completed two years of service on September 2. The way he tells it, a man had to be both 35 years old and have completed the two years of service on that date in order to get out of the Army as over-age. Otherwise, he says, a man over 35 can not get discharged except under the point system. Does he know what he is talking about or am I getting a run-around?

Okinawa —Cpl. JAMES D. GREENE

■ Your sergeant either is trying to give you a run-around or he is just plain stupid. He is completely wrong in his interpretation of the regulation regarding discharges for age. WD Circular 269, Section V, which authorizes such discharges does *not* contain any such restrictions.

The regulation clearly states that "enlisted personnel will be eligible for discharge on account of age, provided: a) They are 38 years of age or over, or b) They are 35 years of age or over and in addition have completed a minimum of two years' active military service, and c) Their service is honorable, and d) They apply in writing to their immediate commanding officer for discharge under the provisions of this circular."

Ths circular is effective until March 7, 1947. It should be obvious, therefore, that September 2, 1945, has nothing to do with such discharges.



After Discharge

Dear YANK:

I expect to be discharged very shortly, and I am wondering what happens to my wife's family allowance after I get out. Some of the "experts" around here say that the monthly checks will keep coming for six months after we get out. Others say that's a lot of hooey and that the allotments stop as of the last time we get enough pay to kick in the $22 for our share.

Please straighten me out on this family allowance deal.

Japan —Pvt. HARRY K. LOUIS

■ Both of your sources of information are wrong. The family-allowance payments will continue through the month in which you are separated from the Army. Even if you are discharged on the first day of a month (when your total pay might be only $1.66), the family allowance to your wife for the full $50 will be paid for that month. In such cases, the checks are mailed immediately after the end of the month for which the family allowance applies. In the case just mentioned, where the GI is discharged on the first day of the month, the check would be mailed on the first day of the following month.

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PX

Contributions for this page should be addressed to the Post Exchange, YANK, The Army Weekly, 205 East 42d Street, New York 17, N. Y.

The Paper Drive

OUR brass got a royal chewing because of our paper-conservation drive, but personally I thought it was terrific. It began with a letter from the theater commander to the commanding officer of all units:

> "It has become increasingly difficult to obtain paper supplies from the United States, and timber is not available in this theater. Commanding officers are therefore directed to halt immediately the excessive use of paper in their commands."

A few days later another mimeographed letter went through all the same channels:

> "Effective 1 August there will be inaugurated throughout this theater a program of paper conservation. Extensive publicity will be given this new program, and a report will be submitted in quintuplicate to this headquarters weekly. The report will be sent to the Commanding Officer of the new Special Paper Conservation Detachment at this headquarters."

A later letter suggested several media for publicizing the conservation drive. These included:

1) Command directives, bulletins and notices.
2) Leaflets dropped by aircraft.
3) Newspaper stories, publicity releases and photographs.
4) Special "poop sheets."
5) Posters for orderly rooms, latrines and mess halls.
6) Radio scripts.
7) Large cardboard badges, to be worn by all personnel, saying "I Am A Paper Conserver!"

In order to put the paper conservation drive over, each unit was assigned six skilled sign painters and three outdoor advertising writers to work full-time in publicizing the drive. All unit vehicles bore huge placards urging paper conservation.

A later directive pointed out:

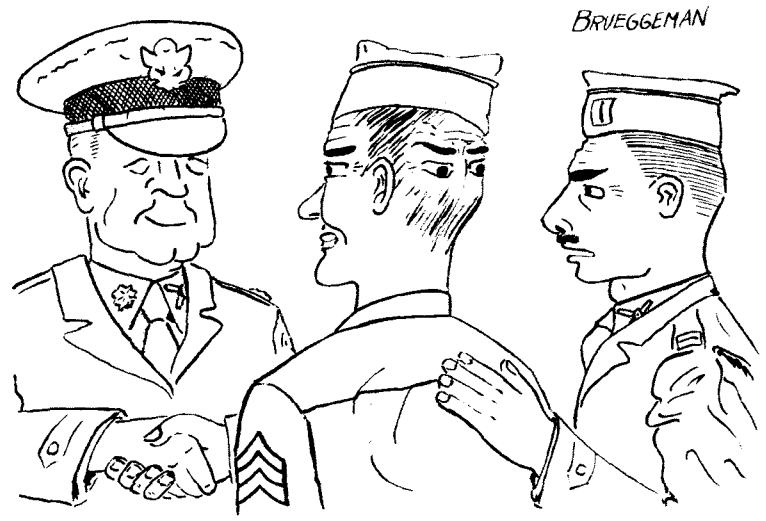
> "To help make this the biggest and most successful "CONSERVATION OF PAPER PROGRAM" in the history of this theater, a new Conservation Manual (Conservation of Paper, No. 114) is being published, and will be distributed to all officers and EM of this command. This manual supersedes the older Conservation Manual (Conservation of Paper, No. 71)."

Things were going along in good shape, and everyone in the command was very paper-conscious, when Washington suddenly snafued the deal.

Without any warning, a top-priority wire came through:

> YOUR CONSERVATION PROGRAM HAS EXHAUSTED PAPER ALLOTMENTS YOUR THEATER AND WILL CEASE IMMEDIATELY PD DISBAND SPECIAL CONSERVATION DETACHMENT PD ALL OFFICERS YOUR THEATER ABOVE FIELD GRADE HEREBY REDUCED SECOND LIEUTENANTS ELIGIBLE INFANTRY TRANSFER AND THEIR POINT SCORES REDUCED TO ZERO REPEAT ZERO PD DURING THIS PAPER EMERGENCY ALL COMMUNICATION YOUR THEATER WILL BE MADE BY WORD OF MOUTH.

—Cpl. RICHARD SLOAN



"Sarge, I want you to meet Sgt. Evans. Best detail sergeant I ever had." —Pfc. D. G. Brueggeman, Columbia AAB, S.C.

REAR-ECHELON DAY ROOM

Men lean over letters home,
Looking for something new to say,
Though this day was the same for them
As the day before,
And the day before that.

Outside, in the warm night air,
The generator hums,
Suggesting sleep.

Men look at a snapshot
Night after night,
Or hear conversations
Dwindle into repetition:
Of the last good bar,
And always of a woman.

Men lean over letters home,
And there is nothing new to say
Because they remember
That they know about tomorrow,
And about the next day,
And the day after that.

Marianas —Sgt. STAN FLINK

RECONVERSION

The war is over,
and we're all reconverting.
But one small problem
remains disconcerting:
What will happen to the playful little moron
Who always said, "Don't you know there's a war on?"

Sheppard Field, Tex. —Pvt. ARNOLD WOLF

TAPS

Often I heard it,
Turning the night
Into a respite
From the day's fight.

Over a barracks
Silent with sleep.
Taps is a love song
Haunting and deep.

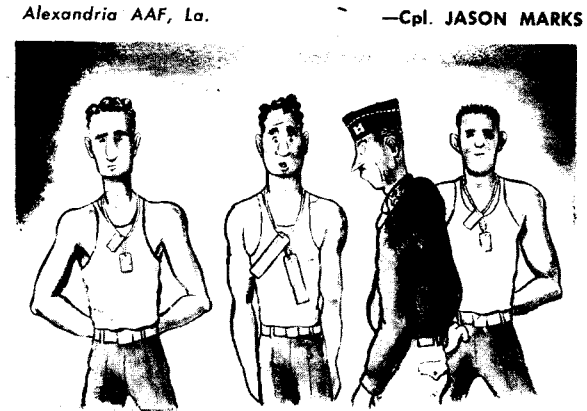
Facing the darkness,
Day at its end,
Taps is a handclasp
Sent by a friend.

Asheville, N. C. —S/Sgt. VIRGINIA C. SMITH

FALL GUY

Autumn's filled with sadness,
How my poor heart grieves—
They had me out this morning
Policing up the leaves.

Alexandria AAF, La. —Cpl. JASON MARKS



"Pvt. Poindexter W. Van Battengarth-Bottingwell, sir." —Pfc. F. Q. Hewitt, Camp Hulen, Tex.

Then this is Goodbye

"I THOUGHT—I hoped," the beak-nosed, beady-eyed creature sobbed, "that it was love, honor and obey—forever. Love, honor and obey—until death do us part."

She pawed for a khaki-colored piece of cotton in her pocket, blew her nose, sniffled and resumed. Her voice came out in little gasps, but the words had a drill-like precision. Between sentences her false teeth made a whistling, "hup, two, hup, fup" sort of sound.

"Must it really be good-bye?" Sadly she rearranged her red-tape scarf and looked pleadingly at the soldier.

He stood, hands in pockets, peering out at the area outside the room. But his eyes were on some far horizon. He felt tired and middle-aged, and his union had not been a happy one. He longed for separation.

Slowly, weighing his words, he spoke. "Remember," he said, "you promised."

She turned, stared at him a moment and then, forgetting herself, barked unceremoniously, "Take ya hands outa y'pockets! And stand at attention! Whereinhell d'ya think ya are?"

Then her face took on a more attractive cast, and she spoke again, softly and placatingly. "Promised what?" she asked.

The soldier eyed her warily. "To let me go—to free me from this bond. It was, after all, just a marriage of convenience. As a matter of fact, it was practically a shot-gun marriage. But you promised you'd let me go when you no longer needed me. I'm *not* essential to your happiness."

"But I need you," she said.

"I'll bet you say that to all the boys. Don't try any of that stuff on me. Anyway, you'll have plenty of fellows—all of them regular guys."

"But," she insisted, "they don't have your—your—*je ne sais quoi.* I realize that now."

He spoke sneeringly. "And absence makes the heart grow fonder. That is, absence with your leave. How can you throw all that bull—the way you've treated me! Why, I'm going back with four stripes against me!"

She smoothed the OD over her knees. "I know life's been hard. You never could stand my officer relations. But I've done my part. I've given you a nice clean bed—fine tinned food. What more could you want? Why don't you take a break and think things over?"

He spoke decisively, almost a man again. "I'm going to make that break a clean one."

"Then this is good-bye," she said coldly. "Go—I never want to see you again!"

He had never heard an order with such enthusiasm. And he never obeyed one more enthusiastically.

Fort Bliss, Tex. —Sgt. SYD LANDI

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Cognac

The stuff is mellow—chiefly because German occupation troops were too dumb to smell out private stocks of VVO the cagey Charentais stashed away to ripen in charred-oak casks.

Remy Michenot demonstrates tasting technique.

By Sgt. GEORG N. MEYERS
YANK Staff Correspondent

COGNAC, FRANCE—The name of this town is Cognac. This is where the stuff comes from. And, as any barfly from Berlin to Brussels will inform you, unless it *does* come from here, it ain't cognac.

If all the goblets of cognac (and simulated cognac) that Americans have tossed down in Europe since H-Hour-plus-5 were placed stem to stem, there would be enough full-bodied, aromatic, topaz-colored alcoholic liquid to float a troopship. This statistic should make the people of the town of Cognac very happy. They would like nothing more than to float several troopships in cognac, at the prevailing tariff per snort.

The next best thing would be for those Americans to whom nightly cognac transfusions become SOP, to vanquish boredom and despair, to carry the cognac habit back to the U. S. and continue to call, over American bars, for cognac. Only in this way will the citizens of Cognac realize that the American infatuation with cognac is not just one of those things—a man far from home, lonely and brooding for smoky Scotch and tangy bourbon, giving his affection to any sharp, heady, amber jolt that pleased him for the evening and made him hate himself in the morning.

The people of Cognac—from the heads of the great houses like Hennessy, Martell, Camus, Hine and the other big names in fancy liqueurs, to peasants like Louis Bourdin, the grapegrower on the hillside overlooking the town and the River Charente—all sincerely hope that the affair of the Americans and cognac will not turn out to be simply a wartime alliance.

That is because the *chais*—the storage sheds—of Cognac were seldom fuller than they are right now, and the soonest possible reopening of commercial shipping will delight the exporters.

It is not, as the local captains of industry assure you, that the people of Cognac were the victims of singular harshness during the war and the German domination. Surely, there is scarcely an industrial group in all of France that weathered those bad years with less annoyance than the vineyardists, the distillers and the blenders of cognac in the region of the River Charente. That is admitted by a man like Maurice Martell. For 200 years his family has blended cognac for connoisseurs in the far corners of the earth, and now he and his brothers Paul, Jean, Michel and Andre are carrying on the Martell tradition.

The Germans were a nuisance, to be sure, and they, too, like the Americans, were eager to drink up all the cognac in France. For that reason the manufacture of cognac was but triflingly interfered with. Which was just, since cognac is a business for the older men, the men too worn and set in their ways to be taken as soldiers. Of 350 men employed by the House of Martell, for instance, only six were dragged away for the Army or perhaps slave labor.

Moreover, the Germans, demanding cognac to drink and paying unquestionably with francs stolen from the Bank of France, were stupid drinkers. Palates dulled by bourgeois beer were scarcely sensitive to the qualities that make the magnificent cognac. By being clever, one could satisfy the Germans with inferior brandy, leaving the good cognac to ripen in their casks of Limousin oak. As Maurice Martell pointed out, there is now at least 12 percent more cognac available for export than in 1939.

Even so, with the Germans there were forever obstacles, and it required the utmost in French ingenuity in order not to let the fires die under the pot-stills. But such a sharp young executive as Michel Camus, for example, let nothing stand in his way in the seasonal production of cognac. Germans or no Germans. Michel Camus is somewhere under 40 and the firecraker of the cognac world, as anyone in his home town will confess. True, his methods seem so modern as perhaps to be out of place in tranquil, slow-moving Cognac, and even his 81-year-old father frequently shakes his head.

Take the instance of no firewood. Foreseeing this shortage of fuel for the stills, young Michel bought acres of woodland. But lack of gasoline made it impossible for him to haul in the firewood from the forests in trucks. So, Michel bought numerous oxen to drag the wood in carts. But oxen require food, and it was impossible to buy forage. So, Michel bought acres of farmland and cultivated his own forage. Then he sat back and smiled and continued to make cognac, selling the bad to the Germans and storing away the good for after the victory of the Allies, which was, of course, certain.

And the Germans were sometimes troublesome, on a personal basis, you understand. Friendly old Louis Bourdin, with his back bent from fondling vines, did not like to be visited by the Germans. But the airfield was only at the foot of his hill, and whenever the Allied planes would come, all the men from the *Luftwaffe* would run up his hill and hide in his modest distillery. To camouflage their nervousness they would command him to bring them cognac, and of course he always complied. But old Louis was a schemer at heart. He would bring them the early distillations, that liquid of 70-percent alcohol, colored, of course, and sweetened with burnt syrup. If the air danger lasted a long time, one German often had to help another down the hill, stumbling and tearing their faces in old Louis' vines.

ON the whole, if the cognac industry has fared well in spite of the war, that must be because wars come and go and cognac flows on forever. It is proven. You must remember that these are the two most important factors in all the cognac business: time and patience. War and the Germans gave the people of Cognac plenty of time, five years of it. They already had the patience.

For in the manufacture of cognac, in the words of a young distiller named Henri Boisson, you cannot hurry, although it is inadvisable to allow the cognac to ripen in the casks for more than 60 years. Boisson—whose name by a coincidence means "drink"—lives well, though far from lavishly, in a terraced, semi-modern structure 27 kilometers from the town of Cognac. His distillery adjoins the courtyard. It is a low chamber of brick ovens, fat, turnip-shaped copper pot-stills and a maze of tubing.

Boisson purchases his wine from neighboring vineyardists who grow grapes but own no stills. The grapes are of the three types that make the region of the Charente the envy of brandy-distillers the world over: *St. Emilion*, *La Folle Blanche* and *Columbar*. In pressing the wine from the grapes, the farmers take care that the skins and pulp are not eliminated, as it is partly due to this that cognac owes its success. And while it is true that not much modern machinery is used for this pressing process, it is now a somewhat rare spectacle to see the juice of grapes being pressed by peasants with bare feet.

From May to September is the time for the farmers like Louis Bourdin to work, and then comes the *vendenge*, the grape harvest. By November, Boisson and all the other distillers are ready to light the fires under the pot-stills, and they will not go out until the next May.

Watching the distillation of cognac, you would not say that an AGCT score of 50 or higher was required to do it, but the *Charentais* believe differently. They believe that proper distillation demands comprehension which must be handed down from father to son. For that reason, every November gray-headed old Remy Michenot shows up at the Boisson place with his foot-locker. He stays until May, caring for the pot-stills, and then disappears until the next November. This has been his program for 40 years.

The first distillation of the wine produces a *brouilli* of 30 percent alcohol. This liquid is siphoned back into the pot-stills, and the second vaporization leaves a solution of white dynamite that is 70 percent alcohol. This is already cognac.

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but you do not drink it. A small sip is like an incision in the roof of the mouth made with a razor blade dipped in raspberry juice. The raw cognac is drained off through copper tubing into an oaken barrel. And not just any old oak barrel, either. These barrels must be of wood hewn in the forests of Limousin or Troncais. The staves must not be touched with a saw, but fashioned only with an axe.

The rule is, new barrels for new cognac. The young cognac remains in the new casks for from six months to two years, long enough to start to take color but not so long that undesirable particles of oak are dissolved. Then the cognac is transferred into old barrels, great casks that have aged many vintages. After that, it is simply a question of time. As the years mosey by, evaporation gets in its licks. A cask in 1871 held 58 gallons of cognac that registered 112.9 proof. Only 23 years later, the same cask contained 49 gallons whose alcoholic proportion was no more than 56.5 percent. By that it can easily be seen that in so short a period as one man's lifetime, raw cognac might evaporate in volume and alcoholic content to a point where you might as well order a couple of martinis.

Some time before this point is reached, however, the distiller hefts his casks onto a truck and carts them into town to peddle to one of the big blending and shipping houses. Up to now, the head men at these establishments affirm, the cognac has been a simple by-product of nature; now it is time for the role of science.

SCIENCE, however, is represented in a very elusive way, for the most scientific piece of apparatus in any of the big cognac houses is the nose of the taster. The taster, in turn, is the prima donna of the whole cognac shebang. It is he who, through his highly specialized and unutterably sensitive nostrils and taste buds, sets up the standards for the house and sees, by damn, that they stay up. The taster can usually be recognized in a gathering of cognac executives by his ruddy complexion and by a kind of characteristic rolling gait that no one would stoop to call a stagger.

The tasting of cognac, you understand, is more than a science. It is an art. First the tulip-shaped glass is half-filled with the specimen of cognac that is under appraisal. Then the taster, fondling the glass in the palm of his hand for warmth, lifts it to his lips. But he does not drink. Not yet. He makes with the nose. Then the palate must confirm what his nose has said.

Naturally, next to owning the place, the most enviable job in a cognac house is that of taster. Whenever possible the job is kept in a family. For five generations the taster in the House of Martell has been a chap named Chapeau, and this leads the Martell brothers to recite jocularly: "And after his day's work, he can still keep his hat on." It is noticeable that they do not say he can keep his hat on straight.

YOUNG Michel Camus does his own tasting, and he makes it tough for himself by using blue goblets in which the color of the sample is not visible. Part of his preparation for becoming a taster was giving up smoking. He hasn't lighted a fag since 1933. Blindfolded, he can swig out of one of his blue glasses and tell you not only what scalawag of a grape grower is trying to trick him but in which one of the seven main divisions of the cognac country and on which side of the hill the grapes were grown.

It is the taster who determines what cognac to buy from which distiller, how much longer it must be aged and with what other distiller's cognac it must be blended to adhere to the formula of the house.

The blending itself is the most mechanical process in the entire cognac cycle. The various distillations are poured through copper troughs and flannel filters into vats that hold from 3,500 to 6,500 gallons. A churning arrangement accomplishes the mixture, and the blend is drawn off once more in casks to be hauled to the *chais* for additional aging.

The *chais* are the most spectacular aspect of the industry. There, gathering dust under many generations of cobwebs, stretch thousands of barrels (60 gallons each) of cognac. One of the Hennessy *chais* has a capacity of 32,000 barrels. The taster enjoys taking visitors down the line, fishing a little sip here and a little sip there from the casks with a small, slim bottle with a string on it. Each barrel is chalk-marked with the date it began ripening: 1938, 1922, 1900, 1881. One great-grandpappy hogshead is marked 1815.

Age and quality markings on all cognac bottles are more or less uniform: three stars for the run of the vats; VO for very old; VVO for very, very old; and VSOP for very superior old pale. One house, Remy-Martin, insists that VSOP means *versez sans oublier personne*, or pour without forgetting anybody.

From Hennessy's tower on the banks of the Charente, it is possible to look out over the town of Cognac and pick out every building that holds a store of cognac. It's the black roofs. A peculiarity of the evaporation of cognac is that it leaves on the walls and roofs a velvety layer of what the *Charentais* call "microscopic mushrooms"—a fungus growth. There are few roofs in the town of Cognac that are not black.

This is natural, since Cognac is a one-industry town. Those who do not grow grapes or distill wines or work among the giant vats make barrels for aging, bottles for shipping and boxes for packing cognac. There is one man who buys and sells empty bottles for a livelihood. Dealing in empty bottles is not like dealing in empty walnut shells, though it may seem so, and this man is, as Frenchmen go today, very rich. The entire population of Cognac, in fact, seems to be made up of those who are rich and know that they are, and those who are not rich and believe that they are. This is undoubtedly because all of them have placed their fortunes or their faith, or both, in the industry whose product has become synonymous with the name of the town.

And the people of Cognac are jealous of the name of their product. That is why the famous law of May 1, 1909, was passed. The law established an area in the departments of Charente and Charente-Inferieure whose brandies, and those brandies alone, may be labeled with the shipper's name and the one word "cognac."

In the town of Cognac, the most common topic of conversation is cognac. The flaming sunsets of the Charente make artists daub ecstatically at their canvases, but to the residents those are the slanting rays that linger on the hillsides to make their white grapes a bit acid. And everyone knows that it takes an acid grape to make good cognac. Thunder sends the farmers running for their almanacs for, as Louis Bourdin quotes, "If there is thunder in February, you may as well throw your barrels on the manure heap."

And no conversation about cognac can last five minutes without one word creeping in. The word is phylloxera. It's as gruesome as it sounds.

IT happened 60 years ago, but the *Charentais* talk about it as though it were last week. Phylloxera, a parasitic insect with a fiendish appetite for grapes, swept over the Charente. After all the grapes were gone, phylloxera ate all the vines, too. Things looked dark. The entire life of the region was tied up in grapes. Then new vines were brought into the Charente for rootstock. These new roots were either too tough or immune to phylloxera, and salvaged shoots from the old vines were grafted onto the roots.

The people of Cognac like to tell this to Americans. The vines of the Charente are doing fine now, thank you, producing in the small area of 65,000 hectares an annual yield of 2,500,000 hectoliters of wine. And the roots, the new stock whose grafted shoots produced the grapes and the wine for the cognac that American GIs have been drinking since D-Day—why, those roots were imported to France. From America.

Louis Bourdin fondles a fistful of St. Smilion grapes in his vineyard.

An aged distiller rolls out his own barrel of cognac to be sold in town.

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YANK
THE ARMY WEEKLY

Mail Call

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This Week's Cover

THE GI on the left who is scratching that fine hunk of Hereford is Sgt. Robert Smith, home from Alaska and having a good day at an oldtime county fair in Deerfield, N. H. For other pictures of the fair by YANK's Sgt. Reg Kenny see pages 12 and 13.

PHOTO CREDITS. Cover—Sgt. Reg Kenny. 2 through 5—Cpl. Tom Kane. 6—Sgt. Kenny. 7—Left, Sgt. Dick Hanley; right, Sgt. Ben Schnall. 8—British Information Services. 9—Sgt. Pat Coffey. 10 & 11—Sgt. Ted Burrows. 12 & 13—Sgt. Reg Kenny. 16 & 17—Sgt. Georg Meyers. 20—Sgt. Ralph Stein. 21—Sig. Corps. 23—Sgt. Coffey.

Form of Discharge

Dear YANK:

Congratulations to Pfc. Straus for his splendid letter in a recent YANK concerning dishonorable discharges.

Just what are the advantages of white, blue and yellow discharge papers? If the purpose is to label a man, why not paint on the scoundrel's forehead in bold yellow type "Dishonorable" or "Outcast"? That would be the honest, candid and consistent manner in which to handle the situation.

Our society is neither civilized, scientifically educated nor does it adhere to Christian teaching when it practices the barbaric habit of stigmatizing people who have received just punishment for their wrongs.

—Cpl. LOUIS M. THOMPSON

Ft. Sam Houston, Tex.

Dear YANK:

I firmly believe recipients of discharges other than honorable are, in their own unique way, branded for life. I feel I know wherein I speak, for my case is one of many who received the in-between discharge "Without Honor" for a failing which I believe should be treated medically, resulting, if necessary, in a medical-type discharge.

To be more explicit, I served well for approximately three years as an officer in the WAAC and WAC. My efficiency ratings were "Excellent," and in due course I won my promotion. Then I broke—in a moment of insanity wherein another Wac suddenly attracted me in my lonesomeness. This placed me in such a mental and spiritual upheaval that I requested Washington to accept my resignation from the service. After four months of debating, it was accepted. Now that I have returned to my normal keel, I am rather shocked and saddened to see my life in ruins at my feet.

At the present moment I am trying to land a decent job. Since I entered the WAAC immediately after graduation from college in '43, I need must show my discharge in order to account for the three intervening years; also, most application forms require information on military service. The result is—I am still hunting a job.

The public in general is uneducated in the psychology of handling my type of discharge, hence I find it embarrassing and impossible to elucidate upon just why I left the WAC—and just what does this type of discharge mean? Many Army medical doctors believe strongly concerning the injustice of this situation. If only people would realize this and help us with understanding rather than casting us out with condemnation!

I use the word us, for I have voluntarily drunk from the Lesbian cup and have tasted much of the bitterness contained therein as far as the attitude of society is concerned. I believe there is much that can and should be done in the near future to aid in the solution of this problem, thus enabling these people to take their rightful places as fellow human beings, your sister and brother in the brotherhood of mankind.

Columbus, Ohio —(Name Withheld)

Dear YANK:

Personally, Pfc. Clifford A. Straus had better continue on with his work in group psychotherapy and not concern himself with the veterans who eventually will get DDs because a GCM imposed those sentences on them which were approved by higher reviewing authorities.

The men that received a heavy sentence because of going AWOL did not earn a DD because of going AWOL. They earned it because their AWOL was everything short of desertion and if Pfc. Straus ever should have the opportunity to look over their Service Records, I'm positive that he will find that a high percentage of these AWOLs have several Summary Courts against them because of previous AWOL charges.

I most certainly am not in favor of giving a man a DD if he had extenuating circumstances which caused him to go AWOL and, because he did not know how to defend himself during the trial, got a bad break. I'm equally certain that a few of these men are included in the group Straus mentioned, but these are few compared to the many that went AWOL to avoid overseas service or hazardous duty.

As for how they will behave after they are in civvies again, I'd venture to say that the majority of them will take their places in society as good citizens and follow a pursuit which will enable them to earn a livelihood, as about the only jobs they won't be able to hold are Civil Service and Federal positions. Contrary to what Straus would have us believe, they will not be hardened criminals once they are rehabilitated.

Philadelphia, Pa. —(Name Withheld)

Dear YANK:

Pfc. Straus did well to start a campaign on behalf of men expecting dishonorable discharges. Let's pitch in and help.

Many were convicted of the heinous crime of being AWOL during wartime—absent from post of latrine orderly, casual outfit or other equally important places. Are they criminals?

Though many of them could have been handled properly under the 104th, and though many had excellent personal reasons for their absences or other misdemeanors, their sentences exceed those of many civilians convicted of felony.

Let their cases be reviewed. Let full pardons be granted. Give them the benefits (if any) of the GI Bill of Rights. Let them be respectable citizens.

Establish a reviewing board of civilians or peers of the men convicted—not officers who follow a book of recommended penalties. Let the board note that many penalties are heavy simply because of earlier misdemeanors. (Thus, many men are actually serving additional time for former offenses—offenses for which they had already been disciplined.)

Let the cases be reviewed in the light of the colonel who was reduced to major for shooting a Negro without cause, the major who was permitted to resign because he was too ignorant to recognize wholesale train robbery, and the civilians who were "Absent-Ts."

We "good-conduct" men (who didn't get caught) must do all possible to promote justice for those DD men. If we don't, irreparable damage will be done to those men and to many of our communities.

Wright Field, Ohio —Sgt. C. W. WELLS*

*Also signed by 25 others.

Dear YANK:

As Chief Mail Censor in the Security and Intelligence Office of the Southeastern Branch, U. S. Disciplinary Barracks, I have had long enough to become acquainted with the records that the men have built for themselves both in civilian life and the Army, and I believe that the Government would save a hell of a lot of the taxpayer's money if they would use up some of this leftover ammunition and do away with about 75 percent of the men confined in its GI penal institutions.

I'm inclined to believe that the majority of them have gone over the hill repeatedly until they were sure that their records would keep them out of combat. They all want to reform now, but while the war was in full swing they were contented to take their DDs and go merrily on their way.

—Pfc. ALEXANDER S. SHUTY

Camp Gordon, Ga.

Dear YANK:

I don't see why Pfc. Clifford A. Straus is so hepped up about those guys who are "going to be branded for life because they are getting DDs." How about the guys who got "psychological discharges" of various sorts like the notorious "Section VIII"? It seems to me that those fellows have just as much to fear and be ashamed of as the others and even more so in most cases.

I know many people who would rather bear a "criminal record" than one which might indicate some mental quirk or deficiency. Why should a man's adjustive reaction or some psychiatric incident in the Army be spread over the face of his discharge, with public opinion about such things still being what it is? It is true that the Army does not use the numeral "Section VIII" any more, but they still put

"I hate these fast transports!"

—Sgt. Tom Flannery

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down the insipid phrase, "Not recommended for reenlistment, induction, or reinduction," next to the new number.

It is true that a soldier who has been discharged may have his discharge paper reviewed by a special board set up for such a purpose under the new "GI Bill of Rights," but let us not fool ourselves. A soldier has as much of a chance to get justice there as he did under any military tribunal and that is not saying much for this new board, in case any of you guys have never had any experience with "Military Boards."

After all, what has a GI got except his own personal word to back up his story, while the Army has a lot of written stuff about the soldier which has been retained in his record, no matter who put it down or under what circumstances it occurred?

I will agree with Pfc. Straus in so far as to say that a soldier can forget or unburden himself of the most unpleasant experiences that he was subjected to in the Army, but he cannot forgive an undesirable discharge.

Brooklyn, N. Y. —MAX WEINER

Jobless Nurse

Dear YANK:

The ethics of the nursing profession do not permit public letters, but there are some things that even the ANC is finding very difficult to absorb with restraint.

We have been stationed on four posts since 17 July 1945. Nineteen days of that were spent sitting in a staging area waiting for a boat home. We were assured we'd be home by 1 September 1945. On 4 September 1945 we were shipped from the staging area farther from the boat than we had ever been before. The deployment routine had been changed again.

We hardly ever rise from our comfortable chairs, yet we are called essential. Essential to what, and for what, we don't know as we continue reading our magazines for lack of something else to do.

Since when does it require a medical major and captain, two first lieutenants, one second-lieutenant nurse and three Medical Corpsmen to care for 13 ambulatory convalescent patients who are clamoring for transportation home?

Does our Government have no better use for all this wasted money and personnel?

Is it necessary that we taxpayers have to pay taxes during our own and our children's lifetimes for such extravagance?

If they have no work for us, why not the U.S.A.? After 15 months overseas we can stand to look at the U.S.A.! We hear there is still a great shortage of nurses there, and we shall not be too disappointed at being civilians again.

Britain —(Nurse's Name Withheld)

No Battle Credit

Dear YANK:

The latest stench, and it is nauseating, concerns the awarding of the new Air Offensive Star for the Eastern Mandates (Truk) to the various bomb groups in the 313th Wing. This includes Headquarters of that wing, which mainly consists of administrative personnel.

During the maximum effort, we were blandly told by wing officers that we were all one big team, and that we must function as one. We are positive that wing commanders will approve our efforts, not only during the peak of the war, but in preparing operations before the wing landed on this rock.

The merits concerned run up into what is known as POINTS, and, brother, we need them. The reason we service groups don't get battle stars is very simple, very simple, indeed. They say that they had to stop at some point, so they stopped at the service groups. As ridiculous as it seems, that is the answer that we were given.

Tinian —(572 Names Withheld)

Playing Ball with the Japs

Dear YANK:

I have just read the following news item in the *WASC* (War Area Service Command) *Bulletin*, dated September 25, 1945:

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 22—An American-soldier baseball team will tour Japan by air, playing various local Japanese baseball teams for the benefit of war sufferers in Japan, National Broadcasting Company Correspondent Thomas Folster reported today. The opening game of the season will be between American soldiers and students of Tokyo University and will take place at the Navy Shrine Baseball Park, Folster said.

It seems to me that the death of 250,000 of our fellow servicemen and a million casualties cannot be appropriately commemorated by a series of baseball games between Americans and Japanese.

Such use of our national pastime will do much to convince the Japanese that we forgive and forget easily.

The cause of Japanese war sufferers may be a good one. But it will not be served in the long run by an attitude which concludes our painful four-year struggle with friendly competition of a sporting nature.

China —T/Sgt. HOWARD HURWITZ

Veterans' Benefits

Dear YANK:

The last word has not yet been said in criticism of the GI Bill of Rights. I do not assert that my suggestions are applicable to all cases, but I believe they represent an improvement over the bill as it now stands.

Since one of the main concerns of the veteran seems to be the need for ready cash, I suggest the following:

1) All veterans should be permitted to cash in their war bonds at full value immediately instead of waiting the full 10 years.

2) The Government should offer non-interest-bearing loans to GIs, or else pay all interest on all loans secured by veterans from private companies under the present law.

3) Readjustment of pay allowances to veterans returning to school should be made with considerable increases for veterans with dependents.

In addition to the above-mentioned monetary allowances, the following are also suggested:

1) All veterans under 21 should be permitted to vote.

2) Since the veterans' earning power was greatly curtailed while in service, the Government should deduct his length of service, but not less than one year, from the age at which social-security benefits start. This would apply to time in service between 16 September 1940 to date of discharge.

Ft. Totten, N. Y. —Cpl. EUGENE SACKS

Mission Completed

Dear YANK:

We recognize that there are military personnel, especially combat troops and those stationed in the isolated islands of the Southwest Pacific, who have had things rougher than we who are stationed in China-Burma-India. Nevertheless, there are compelling reasons why we should receive early preference for shipment home.

We are furthest removed from the United States. Transportation of subsistence supplies to CBI and maintenance of communications by sea and air are most difficult and expensive. American occupation troops are not required here. India and Burma are British spheres of interest. China is a sovereign nation, and it is up to it to resolve its problems of clearing out the Japanese and restoring internal order, without intervention by American soldiers.

This section of the world is the most alien to our backgrounds and interests. Health conditions in this theater are the worst in the world. Malaria, jungle rot, smallpox, cholera, dengue fever, dysentery, typhus and fungus infections which quickly attack the slightest skin break in any part of the body are frequently epidemic. There is also the mental dread of acquiring such rarer diseases as leprosy and elephantiasis.

Strengthening our claim is the fact that our military mission of supplying wartime China has been fully accomplished. Peacetime supplies can now be sent directly to the coastal ports of China by sea, thus eliminating the dangerous and costly Hump operations and Ledo Road trips.

This is not a plea for special preference in securing discharges, nor do we refer to men eligible for discharge on points or age. We ask only for shipment home, with men who have served longest in the India-Burma and China theaters being sent home first.

India —Cpl. HERBERT ROBINSON*.

*Also signed by 100 others.

Lump-Sum Payments

Dear YANK:

Recently much comment has been made regarding the failure of veterans to continue their National Service Life Insurance. In the capacity of a separation counselor, I feel that I am in a position to shed some light on the subject.

Lacking statistics as to the reasons why dischargees discontinue their insurance, I feel safe in saying, however (as the result of interviews with these men), that many drop their policies because no provision is made for a lump payment upon the insured's death. The argument that the beneficiary will receive monthly benefits is poor consolation.

It is conceded that the Government may have valid objections to the payment of the policy's face value at one time, but many veterans feel that the policy is worthless unless their beneficiaries receive a lump sum to cover the many expenses that arise when death strikes.

To my way of thinking (and this has been concurred in by other counselors), a compromise should be reached in the payment of benefits. A set sum, perhaps 20 percent of the policy's face value, should be made payable upon death, with the remainder in monthly installments. Such a provision should be embodied in a new option for the payment of benefits.

Ft. Story, Va. —T-5 WILLIAM POPPEL

Post-VJ-Day Chicken

Dear YANK:

We have just received a nice little speech in our company mess hall, as did each outfit in the port of Khorramshahr. It seems that the port commander here has put out an order pertaining to any surplus food remaining in the mess kits after a meal.

Hold on to your helmets. Here is the ultimatum:

Any man leaving the mess hall with food in his mess kit will be stopped by a

company officer, have the mess kit tagged and placed in our little company refrigerator to remain there until said soldier wishes to eat again. But before he draws his next meal he must entirely consume his tagged dish of tasty food that has lain there since his previous meal. There must be no waste of food.

After 34 months in this hell-hole it seems pretty chicken to have to take an order like that. And it is only a little sillier than many we have had to carry out lately. Of all the ridiculous orders we have read gripes about in YANK, we think that this one should win the fur-lined pot. Do we get any points for this type of chicken?

Iran —(81 Names Withheld)

Outmoded

Dear YANK:

After reading your recent Mail Call, I feel that I must congratulate the Aberdeen captain and the captain's wife for their excellent analysis of the present relations between officers and enlisted men, and take issue with Capt. Hammond and his explanation of the Army system.

Capt. Hammond's ideas would be faultless if they applied to the Prussian Army of Bismarck's time, but in the modern war of mechanical ingenuity and constant movement his principles cannot be accepted.

One of the latter captain's primary justifications for the top-heavy privileges and social distinction is that responsibility earns privilege. Yet if these superprivileges were not in existence, we would eliminate the irresponsible officer who seeks a commission for the dominant position it affords.

If the Beau-Brummel uniforms and Junker-caste system of excess privilege were eliminated, our future officers would be true leaders.

I agree that discipline is necessary, but why smash initiative by instituting a close-order-drill formula of training for the American Army? Every American victory in history has been won not by cattle-like obedience, but by the inborn initiative that we were fortunate enough to possess.

The Germany Army lost this war to the American Army, and certainly there was no better example of the close-order-drill army than theirs.

Captain Hammond may make the continuation of an outmoded military system his life's work, but the great majority of American youth will spend the rest of their lives protecting future children from the regimentation and heel clicking of a few outmoded militarists.

Panama —Sgt. ANTHONY F. PETRITZ

Not To Be Forgotten

Dear YANK:

The letter in a recent "Mail Call" about a veterans' organization for GIs only, and not for officers, has its amusing side. The reason given was that officers have made so much money that "they are set for life," and would not be interested in getting veterans' benefits.

I have been in this Army, as a GI and as an officer, for nearly four years. I am single and have drawn no dependency benefits. As an EM I was a staff on flying status. Now as a first lieutenant (paddlefoot variety, or sometimes called a 90-day wonder) I figure that I am back to the same pay scale that I was before.

Second, a group of three GIs and myself figured out that a buck private overseas receives in pay and benefits, chow, quarters (if he wasn't in the Army he would be paying rent, clothing, etc., etc.) in the amount of $1,350 a year. That seems to be considerably higher than the average civilian worker has been getting.

The other angle is this. If veterans' organizations work only to get benefits for the veterans, this war has been fought in vain. I did not want a war and I don't want my children, as yet unborn, to go to war. If the veterans' organization of World War II makes it its prime purpose to see that the United States will conduct itself so that it, and other nations, will never again go to war, then the biggest thing the world has ever seen will be a reality.

If the veterans of World War II, EM and officers alike, will think of their experiences in the Army at least once a month for the next 50 years, and tell their neighbors and friends about them, then a national and international conscience against war will be born. This will be worth more than all the bonuses that the veterans can ever hope to get.

India —(Lieutenant's Name Withheld)

Navy Day

Dear YANK:

Here's hoping you can spare space for a legitimate gripe concerning not only us poor Seabees, but all overseas servicemen. What we want to know is, why the hell does the Navy tie up transportation with the traditional Navy Day celebration when there is such a great need for these ships to transport men home?

In our opinion the folks at home would much more appreciate seeing their sons, husbands and brothers instead of our proud fleet. Let's hope that some day the Navy will forget tradition long enough to give a thought to the men.

Guam —M. QUINLAN MoMM3c*

*Also signed by K. Boekholder MoMM3c.

Lost Souvenirs

Dear YANK:

Whatever happened to the souvenirs, personal items and sentimental possessions that remained overseas in the duffel bags which belonged to the wounded evacuees? Judging from the lists and descriptions of left-behinds that I have heard of, some people will be able to retire in less than the required 30 years.

Springfield, Mo. —Pfc. FRED BRONZELL

Barracks for Vets?

Dear YANK:

I would like to suggest that discharged veterans be helped to solve their immediate housing problem by being allowed to occupy the empty barracks on posts which are now vacant or are about to be. These barracks are capable of being heated in cold weather by the use of stoves, adjoining boiler rooms, etc.

A nominal charge for rental could be paid. A vast housing problem, especially for those men and women with families, would be greatly alleviated if this plan were carried out.

Allow the men whose home towns are within a certain radius of vacated posts, camps or stations to make application through the Veterans Administration, and run the posts as a city, with proper laws regarding sanitation, policing, civic rights, etc.

It could become a community system, with various ex-GIs administering the few necessary administrative and supervisory needs of the vets' community.

Ft. Custer, Mich. —(Name Withheld)

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GI TUNESMITH

By Sgt RICHARD HARRITY
YANK Staff Writer

WHEN Frank Loesser, the songwriter, went into the Army back in 1942, a recruit sergeant bellowed something about "by the numbers." Loesser took the guy at his word and spent the next three years turning out a songbook full of GI numbers. The first was "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition," the last "The Ballad of Rodger Young."

Although he had written such Hit Parade songs as "Jingle, Jangle, Jingle," "I Don't Want to Walk Without You, Baby," "Two Sleepy People" and "Small Fry" before entering the service, Loesser didn't find his assignment as a GI composer altogether a snap. Now a civilian again, Loesser says that being an Army tunesmith had "all the cockeyed complications of Tin Pan Alley plus the 96th Article of War."

Not that any brass ever gave Loesser a direct order to have a song hit ready for Saturday inspection or else, but he did have to side-step a swarm of screwy suggestions and requests for tunes at various times.

"Occasionally," he explains, "I had a hard time convincing a zealous character that 'The 12333d Machine Records Unit, Camp Withlacochee Forever' was not a particularly good title or theme for a march—especially if the character in question happened to be the CO of the 12333d Machine Records Unit, Camp Withlacochee Forever."

On the other hand, Loesser, who started his Army songwriting career with the Air Forces in California and later transferred to the Music Section of the Special Services Division in the East, did write numbers for practically every branch of the service. For the most part, though, he hit GIs where they listened by setting their gripes and longings to catchy music.

When Loesser went through that national agony called basic training, his aching GI back inspired him to write a doleful rondel that went like this:

What do you do in the Infantry?
You march, you march, you march.
What do you do when your pack has got
Your back as stiff as starch?
There is many a fall in the Cavalry,
But never a fallen arch.
And what do you do in the Infantry?
You march, you march, you march.

In the summer of 1942, when we were far from being the best-equipped army in the world, Loesser produced a song that was a national plea and a prayer. It was called, you may remember, "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition."

Not long after that, when staging areas and POEs bulged with troops sweating out assignments overseas, Loesser wrote a number that summed up every doggie's wish in this one:

In my arms, in my arms,
Ain't I never gonna get a girl in my arms?

* * *

Comes the dawn, I'll be gone.
Now does anybody please wanna treat me right?
You can keep your shavin' cream and lotion.
If I'm a-gonna cross the ocean,
Gimme a girl in my arms tonight.

Later, when GIs had landed in Britain, Ireland, Australia, India, Alaska, Panama, Iran and a number of other places and had begun to wonder and worry about those gals back home, Loesser tried to reassure them that all was well in the U. S. romance department by writing a song that Bette Davis introduced in the movie, "Thank Your Lucky Stars." Remember?

You marched away and left this town as empty as can be;
I can't sit under the apple tree with anyone else but me;
For there is no secret lover,
That the draft board didn't discover—
They're either too young or too old.
They're either too gray or too grassy green;
The pickin's are poor and the crop is lean;
What's good is in the Army,
What's left will never harm me,
They're either too old or too young,
So, darling, you'll never get stung.

In between writing this and other songs that won favor with civilians and soldiers alike, Loesser was a one-man factory turning out requests from various Army units. For the AAF he wrote such tunes as "The Sad Bombardier," "On the Beam" and "It's Great to be in the Air Corps." For the WAC he came up with "The WAC Hymn" and, in lighter vein, "First-Class Private Mary Brown." Loesser also wrote the scores for several GI shows.

In addition to filling Army requests, Loesser helped out the Treasury Department with a song known as "Road to Victory," which was used in connection with the Third War Loan Drive. He even went international and wrote a number for the Canadian Armored Corps entitled "The One-Pip Wonder," a one-pip wonder being the Canadian equivalent of our own 90-day variety.

"But the Army song to end all Army songs," Loesser recalls, "was something called 'Salute to the Army Service Forces.' This ditty said hurray for the Wacs, the Medics, Ordnance, the Quartermaster Corps, Special Services, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, for 32 pages. It was like making love to a telephone book."

One gripe song that Loesser wrote in the early days of the war came back to haunt him recently while he was waiting to be separated at Fort Dix. Loesser was stretched out on his sack at the New Jersey center dreaming about a gray flannel suit when a guy strode past his tent singing, "Why Do They Call a Private a Private?"

Hearing the song reminded Loesser that after three years of hard work and diligent application he had finally achieved the rank of Pfc.

Now that Loesser, who is 35, married and the father of a one-year-old named Susan, is out of uniform, he plans to shuttle back and forth between Hollywood and New York, writing music for the movies and for Broadway shows. His last Army song, like one of his very first, was about the Infantry. But where "What Do You Do in the Infantry?" was a more or less comic gripe, his final tune was a sincere tribute to the Queen of Battles.

IN casting about for a subject that would sum up the work of the Infantry in this war, Loesser heard about a Congressional Medal of Honor winner from Ohio who had been killed in the Solomons. He put Rodger Young's story into a GI folk song that you'll probably be hearing for a long time to come:

No, they got no time for glory in the Infantry,
No, they've got no use for praises loudly sung;
But in every soldier's heart in all the Infantry
Shines the name, shines the name of RODGER YOUNG.
Shines the name - - - - RODGER YOUNG;
Fought and died for the men he marched among.
To the everlasting glory of the Infantry
Lives the story of Private RODGER YOUNG.

As a lot of people have pointed out, this hasn't been much of a singing army. It's been a listening army, though, and there isn't much doubt that Frank Loesser has provided some of the best and closest listening the Army has done. There isn't much doubt, either, that his songs add up to a kind of "by-the-numbers" history of what GIs did and endured.

THIS lady's publicity agent told us that "she cuts quite a glamorous figure dancing the tango." It looks as if she cuts a glamorous figure sitting down too, and we don't mean quite. Pat Clark's father is a major, but she has no obvious prejudices against enlisted men. She's 20 years old, weighs 112 pounds and has brown eyes and wavy blonde hair. Her next picture for Warner Bros. is "The Big Sleep."

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The soldier who came in was dirty and unshaven.

YANK FICTION

LATE TO BATTLE

By Sgt. WILLIAM MAY

THE bored sailor at the registration desk said, "Hut Number One." He threw a folded blanket on the counter, and Jackson picked it up and carried it with his equipment to Hut Number One. When he saw that the hut was about half filled, and everyone awake, he went to the next building. There were only three men asleep on cots. He picked an empty cot at the end of the hut and dumped his gear on it.

Although he was weary, he took out his shaving kit, stripped to his shorts and shoes and went in search of a shower. He found it at the end of the row of huts. He had the shower to himself, so he stayed under the cooling spray for a long time. When he turned the water off he could hear the faint cries of men playing softball on a field next to the Transit Camp. The sound made him lonely.

Back in the hut he took off his shoes and stretched on the cot. He lit a cigarette and stared at the ceiling. Heat pressed on the hut. He felt sweat sliding down his chest.

A tall, thin tech sergeant came in, banging the screen door behind him. He threw a suitcase on a cot.

"Still two hours before we take off," he said in disgust. Then he looked at Jackson. "Just get in?"

Jackson nodded.

"Where you bound? Home?"

"No," Jackson said, trying to sound easy. "I'm going to Okinawa."

"Replacement?" The sergeant sat on the cot and twirled a pair of sun glasses.

"Yeah."

"Hell, you might as well stay right here now that the war is over," the sergeant said cheerfully.

Everybody seemed to think that he was lucky. He felt lonely and unnecessary. He felt blackballed. He wished he had been here two years ago.

There was a secret society here, a big fraternity, and all the members were going the other way. He was late to battle.

"You going back for good?" Jackson asked.

"Not yet," the sergeant said. "I'm in Air Evac. We're taking some patients back to the States. We hit Kwajalein, Johnston, Hickam Field and then dear old Hamilton Field in California. Thirty hours' layover. I figure I'll be able to get in on the tail end of that victory celebration." He sighed and lowered himself on his cot.

"Wake me up for chow, will ya?" he asked.

"Okay," Jackson said.

Jackson tried to sleep. He lay on his back and crossed his arms over his eyes. Sweat stung the corners of his eyes. He listened to the beating of his heart.

The screen door banged again and he rolled over, pretending he was asleep. Two men, talking and laughing, passed his cot and went to the other end of the hut. He buried his face in the folded blanket which served as a pillow.

He slept for a while. When he woke there were more men in the hut. He remained motionless and listened to the voices.

"Where you guys from? Okie?" the Air Evacuation sergeant was asking.

"Yeah. We were on a can. Radar picket patrol. Boy, was that ever rough!"

"So I heard."

"Ninety days of it. We had a belly-full. Those suiciders didn't give us any rest."

"You going home now?"

"Yeah. We got tired of waiting for a priority, so we bummed a ride up here on a PBY. I figure we can get a ride the rest of the way."

"See those guys down at the end of the hut?" the sergeant asked.

"The ones that just came in?"

"Yeah. They're B-25 boys going back to Oahu. Maybe you can ride part of the way with them."

"An idea! We'll ask 'em when they wake up."

"Well," the sergeant said, "how about some chow? I shove off in half an hour."

Jackson heard them get up. Somebody shook his cot.

"Want chow, soldier?"

"Okay, thanks," Jackson mumbled, keeping his eyes shut.

When the screen door had closed, Jackson sat up. He put his shoes on and was pulling on his trousers when the screen door banged again.

The soldier who came in was dirty and unshaven. His uniform was wrinkled and stained with sweat. He wore the blue braid of the Infantry.

"God, it's hot," he said and sat down on the cot next to Jackson. He threw his faded musette bag on the floor and took off his cap.

His hair was grey and his face was lined. Jackson was surprised at the divisional patch. He had thought the Infantry was all kids.

"Where's the latrine?" the Infantryman asked.

"Down at the end of the huts," Jackson said.

"I need a shower, but I'm so pooped I can hardly sit up," the Infantryman said. "But I ain't complainin'. I'd stand up on that plane all the way, just to get back to the States."

Jackson said nothing. "You going home, too?" the Infantryman asked.

Jackson took a deep breath. "No, I'm going up to Okinawa as a replacement."

"Well," the Infantryman shrugged, "you're lucky. You missed the fireworks. You just come out?"

Jackson stood up and reached for his shirt. "No, I've been over about six months," he lied. He had left Seattle two months ago.

"What's it like back home?"

"Same as ever, I guess."

"I never thought I'd make it," the Infantryman said. "Thirty-six months. I can't believe I'm going back." He broke off and stared at the floor. "Well, I'm taking that shower right now," he said finally.

When he had gone, Jackson finished dressing. He looked at his clean, new duffle bag and musette bag, the new rifle in its new protective covering. Like a tag, or a brand. He shoved them far under the cot.

Outside, the air was a little cooler. He stood in front of the hut and looked toward the sea. The ships at anchor were motionless. Near the shore was a thin curl of surf.

From the mess hall came the clatter of trays and the sound of voices. Jackson turned and began to walk away from camp. He didn't know where he was going but he wasn't hungry. He knew that he would walk until it was late.

Then, maybe, they would all be asleep when he got back to the hut.

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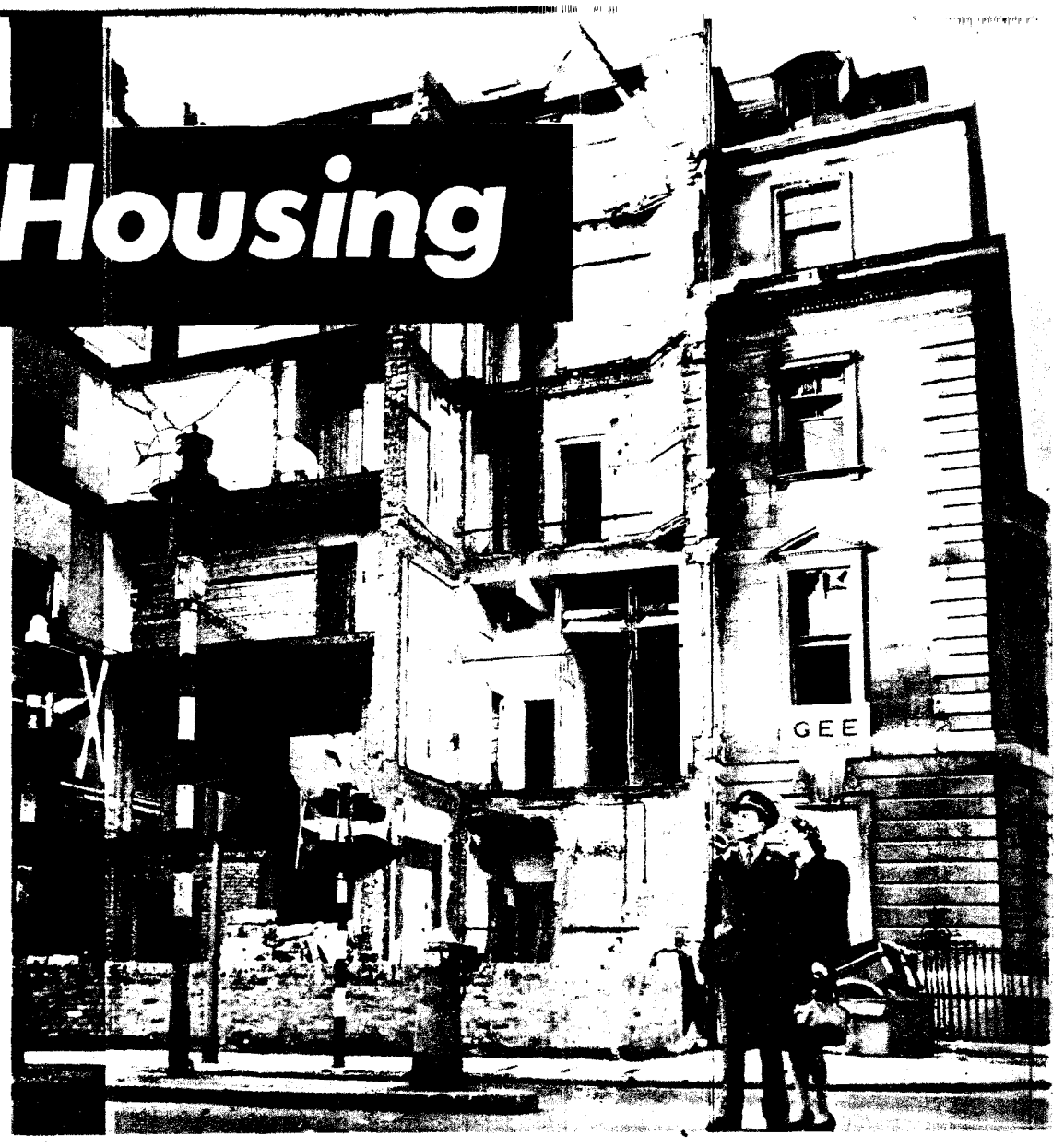
British Housing



House-hunting may be tough for the GI returnee, but Britain's Tommy has it tougher still. Here's what he's doing about it.

By Sgt. EARL ANDERSON
YANK Staff Correspondent

LONDON, ENGLAND—You are, perhaps, one of those who will go house-hunting, when you come out of the Army, to find a place in which you and your family can live. Perhaps you want to do something about that dream cottage you and the girl friend have been planning.

Maybe you anticipate a lot of pavement-pounding after a long search under the "For Rent" or "For Sale" headings in the classified section of your newspaper. In some parts of the States, solving your housing problem is as tough as trying to figure out how to get a week's furlough during basic.

But it is nothing compared with what the British soldier has to contend with on his return to "civvy street."

Here's a quick look at what Tommy Atkins (civilian) is up against if he doesn't want to double-up with his in-laws.

In the first place, although Britain's housing standards were improving before the war, they had not reached the goal of a separate home for every family that wanted one. Housing was tight in Britain in 1939.

Then, five years ago, came Hitler's blitz, followed by the "little blitz" the next year. The Royal Air Force knocked the German bombers out of the sky before England could be forced to her knees, but not before the roofs had been blown from over her head. Then came the buzz-bombs. They flew in indiscriminately and all too often fell in the working class districts where jerry-built houses, if they did not collapse, opened their seams and dropped their tiles to let the famous British weather complete the damage the explosion had begun. Then came the V-2s.

Today you can walk through sections of London where whole blocks are cleared out and not a habitable house or tenement is left standing. You can travel to Plymouth or Coventry or to other cities and see the same thing. The only difference is in the degree of neatness with which the scattered bricks have been gathered into piles, or in the kind of weeds that flower in the open-air basements.

Averaging them up—the bombed with the unbombed—one house out of every three in Britain has been either damaged or totally destroyed.

The fact that only two houses out of three are left undamaged is at the heart of the housing shortage. But other things intensify it. For instance, before the war Britain's contractors completed an average of 300,000 dwellings a year. But then building practically stopped when the nation mobilized, not more than 200,000 dwellings being erected during the war years. In the six years during which bricklayers laid down their trowels to join the services or spent their time building war factories instead of homes, Britain lost approximately two million dwellings.

In a paper presented by the Minister of Reconstruction last March, it was estimated that some three-quarters of a million dwellings would be necessary to provide a separate home for every family that wanted one. In addition, another half-million would be needed to clear the slums and abate overcrowding. In the next ten years, it was stated, four million new homes will be needed. That's a lot of building, considering that the population in Britain is roughly 45,000,000.

Some start was made by the wartime Coalition Government, but it was not able to keep up with the program. Everybody realized that the job would fall to the government that was in power after the defeat of Japan, and the demand of the people, particularly returning servicemen, for shelter forced housing to the fore as an issue that had to be met by all the political parties.

The Labor Government got the call. Addressing the House of Commons shortly after the election, Prime Minister Attlee said he didn't suppose that there was anything more important on the minds of the people than housing, and he went on to pledge that the Government would do everything within its power to increase and accelerate the erection of houses. He laid the responsibility for directing the housing campaign in England and Wales on the lap of the Minister of Health (in Scotland, the Secretary of State).

The Minister of Health is Aneurin Bevan, and if he isn't going to be one of the busiest men on these islands during the next few years, it will be because that proverbial one-armed paper hanger with the itch has taken up jitter-bugging. One day after his ministry was placed in charge, the 47-year-old Bevan—who is younger than most of the cabinet—told the local authorities to have contracts for the first installment of permanent houses ready as soon as possible. It was hoped that the building of 27,000 brick houses would be underway by winter. Some 220,000 houses are the target for the first two years.

RE-HOUSING Britain is not going to be easy. Put your finger almost anywhere on Britain's economic life and you'll touch a nerve that somehow affects the business of providing a cottage or three-rooms-and-bath for Tommy Atkins.

Take labor, for instance. George Isaacs, Minister of Labor, spoke to the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers last month. He estimated that the combined labor force—both building workers and civil-engineering workers—stood at 600,000 men, a figure which is less than half of what it should be to do the job. It will have to be doubled by June of next year. That involves new problems, primarily with the demobilization authorities—but help is scarce, and the call for hands comes from all directions. Name a basic industry and you name the industry crying for men.

Lord Keynes, when he left for America to work out a transition from Lend-Lease to a basis of peacetime trade between our two countries, carried some of the problems of the building program with him. One of these problems is shortage of material, which, though not as serious as the manpower shortage, can certainly hold up a building program. It is conceivable that many fittings and other construction material could come from America.

Over all hangs the immediate need for homes—a need that becomes more desperate as the shortening days foreshadow the coming of winter. Some of the drive that would ordinarily go into permanent homes had to be diverted toward putting up temporary structures. These do not help solve the longtime housing problem and are intended to last not more than 10 years. They do provide immediate shelter, however, and clusters of them nestle among the bomb ruins, like Alpine cottages overshadowed by the mountains. So far as the Ministry of Health is concerned, it does not intend to allow the existence of these temporary houses to interfere with the construction of permanent homes.

Prefabricated houses (which are not necessarily temporary houses) have been considered as a means of saving labor and as a method of utilizing workers not ordinarily in the building trades. Various experimental types have been built and a close tab kept on the number of man-hours required. But the novelty of prefabrication does not seem to excite the same amount of public interest here as it does in the States. The traditional methods of building solid, brick houses are, of course, preferred by those in the building trades, for any large-scale swing to prefabrication could mean unemployment after the housing deficiency has been made good.

There is hardly a phase of building that has not been been spotlighted by some interested group, from the training of new apprentices to the attempts to get architects and contractors to work closer together, as they do in the States. This closer collaboration was one of the many recommendations brought back by a mission from the Ministry of Works after it had traveled extensively throughout the States last year.

There is, however, a silver lining to this housing cloud. The destruction of vast sections of Britain's cities will give her people an opportunity to plan and build on a large scale the kind of cities they want to live in, to take the place of cities that just grew and sprawled out over the centuries. For the immediate present, however, Tommy Atkins, coming out of the services, will be looking not so much for a silver lining as for a good, solid, rain-proof house.

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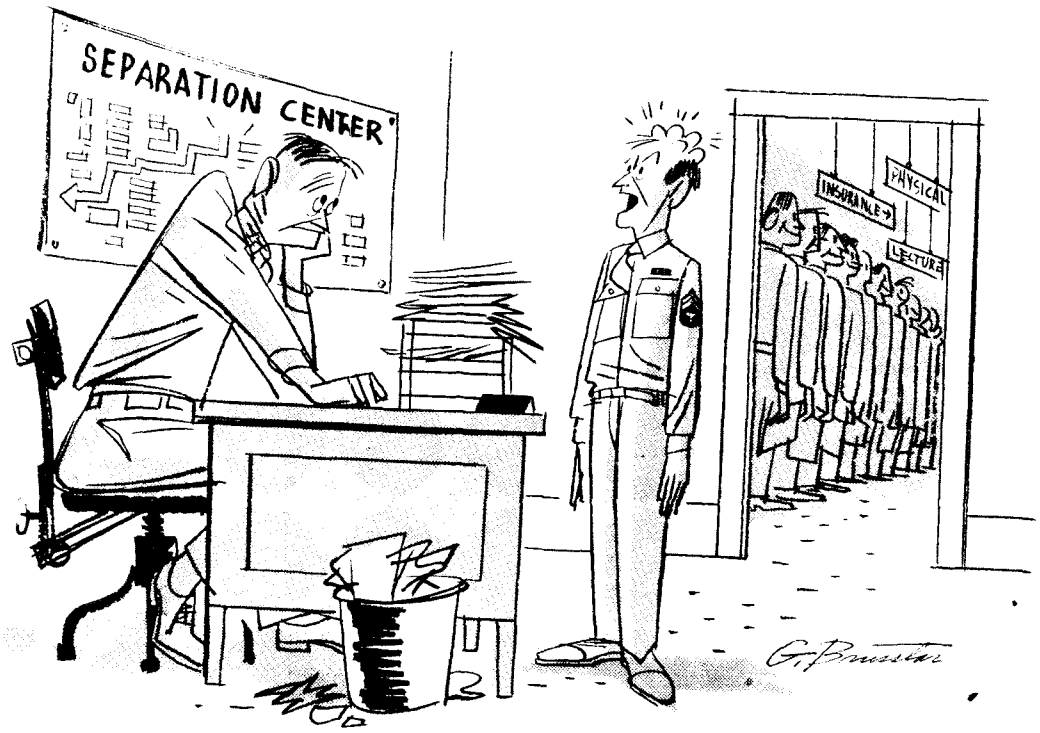
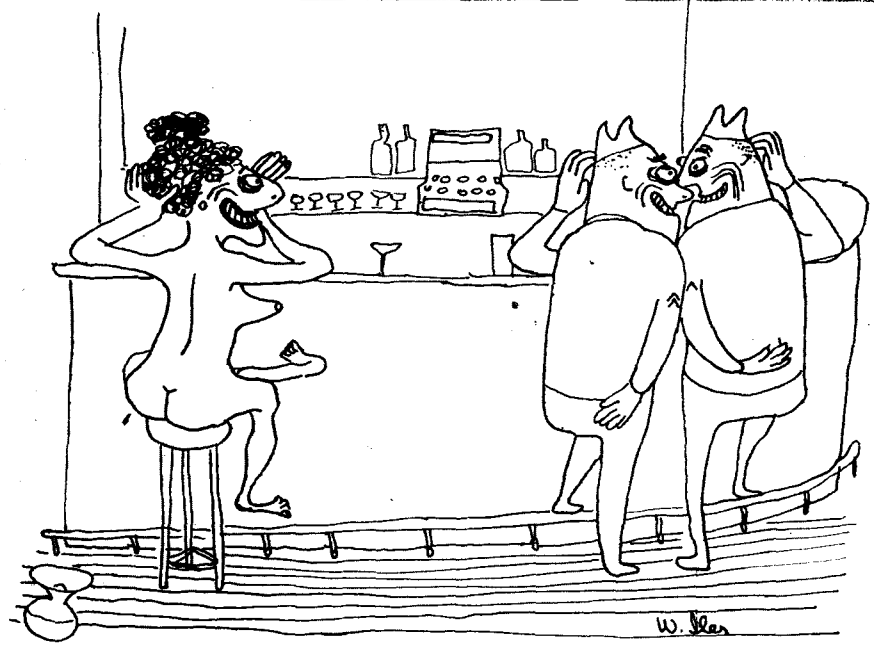
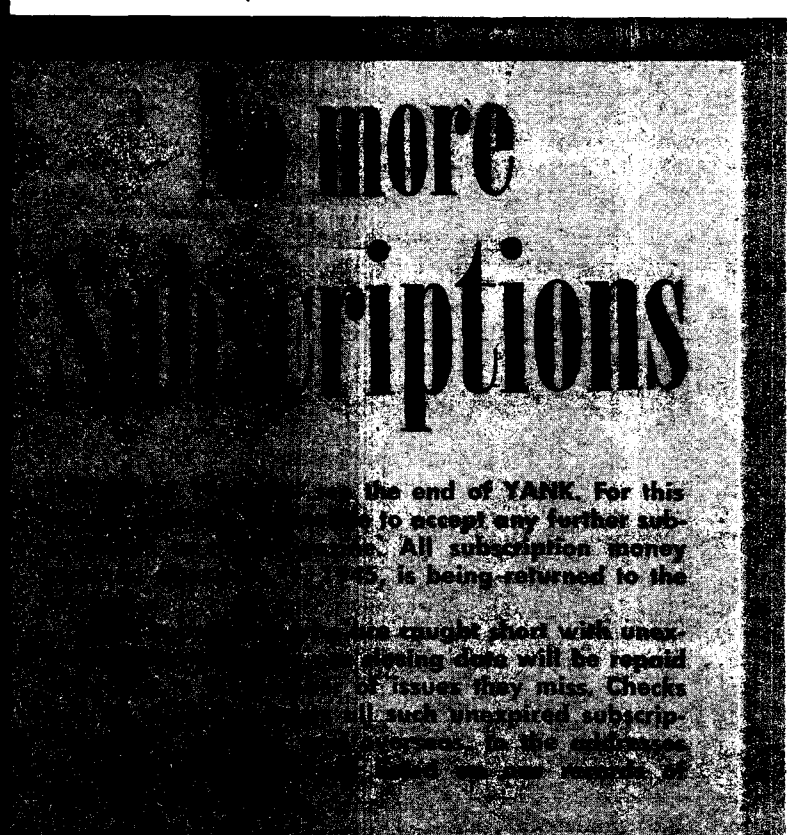
". . . AND NOW ALL THE MEN HAVE A JOB TO DO—NOBODY LAYING AROUND IDLE."
—T-5 Harvey Kurtzman



"IT HAPPENS EVERY TIME I ASK THEM THE SIMPLE QUESTION, 'WOULD YOU CARE TO RE-ENLIST?' "
—T-3 Gordon Brusstar



"WHAT THE HELL IS SHE STARING AT?"



"IN VIEW OF YOUR EXCELLENT RECORD, SMITH, I'M HAVING YOU TRANSFERRED TO THE OFFICERS' SIDE!"
—M/Sgt. Ted Miller

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